

## Professor

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journalism school," Konkle said. Advertising professor Van Kornegay said Witkoski's Introduction to Public Relations course is being taken care of.

"We've got a group of people who immediately stepped up and said we'll be happy to carry the ball for him to the finish line," he said. "So there are about four different faculty who will take turns to finish it out." Media law professor Erik Collins will take over for Witkoski's graduate class.

**"He was one of those personal professors who got to know his students really well."**

BRUCE KONKLE  
PR PROFESSOR

A Beaufort native, Witkoski earned his bachelor's and master's in English and his doctorate in linguistics at USC. He worked on the staff of the S.C. House of Representatives and served as director of research for the Medical, Military, Public and Municipal Affairs Committee.

Witkoski is survived by his wife, Maggie, and four children. Funeral services will be held at 1 p.m. Saturday at St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church in Columbia.

Comments on this story? E-mail gamecocknews@gwm.sc.edu

# TV, radio executives clean up airwaves by nixing programs

BY JONATHAN D. SALANT  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — "Bubba the Love Sponge" is gone, and radio shock Howard Stern is on hiatus from some stations. TV networks are time-delaying certain shows to make sure inappropriate material doesn't make it onto the airwaves.

Broadcast executives cited these and other examples Thursday as evidence they are taking heed of the government's call to clean up the airwaves. "We at Fox have heard your concerns loud and clear," said Gail Berman, the network's president of entertainment. "We sincerely regret that a few incidents of inappropriate programming have overshadowed the good shows we proudly air on Fox each week."

It was the second time in two weeks that the House Energy and Commerce telecommunications subcommittee queried broadcasters about indecency. The first hearing came on the heels of the notorious Super Bowl halftime show that ended with singer Justin Timberlake exposing Janet Jackson's right breast to 90 million viewers.

"Networks are being proactive in the efforts to clean up the airwaves," said subcommittee chairman Fred Upton, R-Mich.,

who has sponsored legislation to increase the maximum fine for indecency from \$27,500 to \$275,000.

Several broadcasters endorsed the higher fines. John Hogan, president Clear Channel Radio, said the move would "serve as a 'shot across the bow' of the industry, putting us all on notice that Congress and the FCC (Federal Communications Commission) are serious about cleaning up the airwaves."

Federal law bars radio stations and over-the-air television channels from airing material that refers to sexual and excretory functions between 6 a.m. and 10 p.m., when children may be tuning in. The rules do not apply to cable and satellite channels and satellite radio.

FCC Chairman Michael Powell and other members of the FCC have criticized radio and TV network executives for not doing more to police the airwaves. They have warned executives they will face greater scrutiny and more fines if they fail to act.

The most dramatic response came from the nation's largest radio chain, 1,200-station Clear Channel Communications. This week it fired the disc jockey known as "Bubba the Love Sponge," took the Stern show off

the six stations it owns and outlined new standards that include immediately suspending any on-air talent accused of airing indecent material by the FCC.

Hogan said he was "ashamed" of the "Bubba" show. The program, which aired in Florida, recently brought a proposed \$755,000 FCC fine for sexually explicit content and other alleged indecency violations.

Meantime, officials of ABC, NBC and Fox told lawmakers they are beginning campaigns touting the V-chip in television sets that allows parents to block certain programs. The network executives also said they would also call more attention to TV program ratings, such as using larger lettering or rerunning the ratings after every commercial break.

ABC President Alex Wallau said his network would air the Academy Awards on a time delay for the first time in the event's 76-year history.

The three network executives also told lawmakers their affiliates are free to reject any programs they feel are inappropriate. For example, Wurtzel said the NBC affiliate in Salt Lake City does not air "Saturday Night Live." Wallau said "NYPD Blue" does not air on two ABC stations in Mississippi.

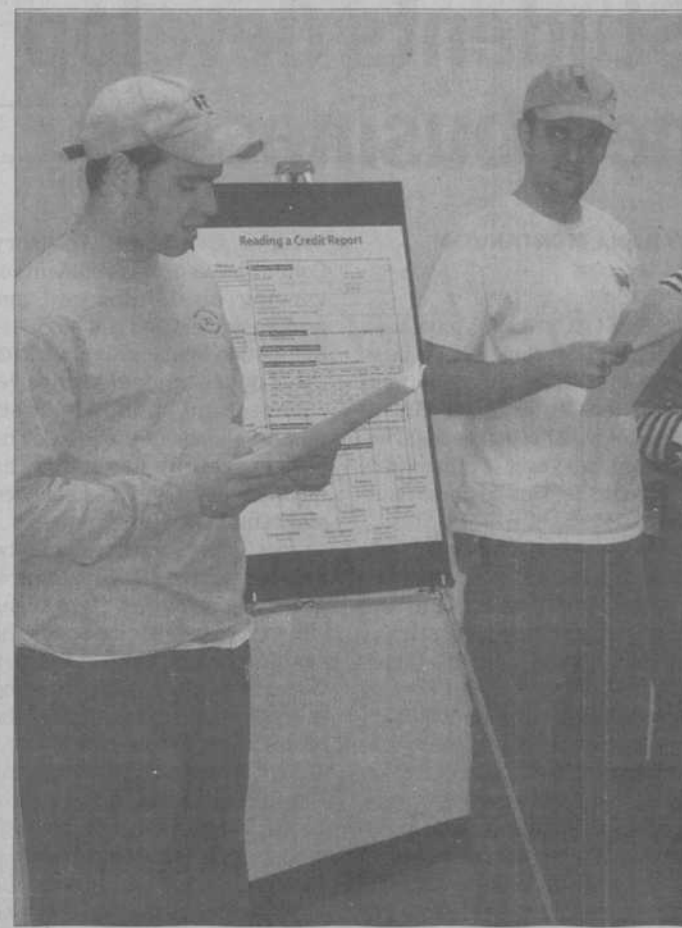


PHOTO BY ALISON SHUMAN/THE GAMECOCK  
Morgan Cooke, Bates House resident adviser, consults his curriculum while teaching on Wednesday.

# PR team brings credit seminar for students

BY HILARY SCHRAMM  
THE GAMECOCK

Ninety students attended two sessions of a credit education program this week at Patterson and Bates residence halls.

The program, "Your Credit. Your Future," produced by USC's Palmetto Solutions team contending in a public relations competition, taught students about credit through video, a quiz and personal testimonies by the students' RAs. It was held Tuesday night at Patterson and Wednesday night at Bates House.

Palmetto Solutions decided to seek the help of RAs and University Housing in teaching about credit after focus groups and over 250 surveys showed that RAs are very influential in the lives of their residents. Three RAs at Patterson and five at Bates participated in the event, and all RAs in Bates were encouraged to bring at least four students to the Wednesday program.

"We really thought it was important to include the RAs in our education programs, because research showed how influential they are," third-year public relations student Jacque Riley said. "Their presence brought the students in and allowed them to open up to a more personal level."

During the program, RAs asked questions and rewarded students who answered with 11 gift certificates from local restaurants. Restaurant sponsors included Texas Roadhouse, Hennessey's Restaurant and Lounge, Chico's, Sesame Inn and India Pavilion. They also showed a video about a clueless freshman forced to make credit decisions.

Students enjoyed the events,

which also included music, free food and free gifts such as pens and peanuts. Preliminary evaluation survey data shows that most students thought the event was successful and informative, and most RAs would recommend that others teach "Your credit. Your future."

"I came to learn about credit, because I didn't have a credit card yet, and they talk about interest rates and applying for one," first-year criminal justice student Shanetra Davis said.

Other students left the meetings with a more serious and accurate idea of what credit is about.

"I like to spend money, and I was thinking about getting a credit card," first-year biology student Kalendra Thompson said. "This was a way to make me think twice."

Credit is growing more important every year, as students across the country grow increasingly dependent upon loans and financing to pay for college. According to the State Public Interest Research Group's Higher Education Project, 64 percent of college students graduated with student loan debt in 1999-2000. Loan provider Nellie Mae currently charts the average student debt at \$18,900.

To help educate young adults about credit and prevent debt problems, the "Your Credit. Your Future" program will also be presented to University 101 classes and area high schools.

More information on credit and on Palmetto Solutions can be found at [www.yourcredityourfuture.net](http://www.yourcredityourfuture.net).

Comments on this story? E-mail gamecocknews@gwm.sc.edu

# Authorities reveal Columbine contacts

BY ROBERT WELLER  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LAKEWOOD, COLO. — Authorities had at least 15 contacts with the Columbine High School killers dating back two years before their murderous attack, the state attorney general said Thursday, angering families of the victims.

Ken Salazar also said he is in-

vestigating whether authorities tried to cover up what they knew about the rampage.

He did not blame the Jefferson County sheriff's office for missing warning signs about Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold and said he found no evidence of negligence.

The attorney general said his investigation is not complete and has grown from a request to look into contacts between the killers and investigators two years before the attack.

Asked if he thought there was a cover-up, he said, "I do not know today." Speaking in a room with somber families of the dead staring at him from the back wall, Salazar promised to issue a supplemental report.

Harris, 18, and Klebold, 17, killed 12 students and a teacher before taking their own lives at the school near Littleton on April 20, 1999. It remains the deadliest school shooting in U.S. history.

Salazar said his investigators looked at how sheriff's officials reacted to 1997 complaints about Harris, from a thrown snowball that cracked a car window to a prank telephone call.

There were more ominous signs, too. Authorities have said an anonymous tip that year led a deputy to a Web site run by Harris that said the two teens had built pipe bombs and concluded, "Now our only problem is to find the place that will be 'ground zero.'"

Authorities on Thursday also publicly unveiled a chilling display of evidence and released two videos, one of the anxious scene in a park across the street from the school that day, and another, 90-minute compilation of videos made by Harris and Klebold.

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