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ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY | OCTOBER 8-10, 2026

ACADEMIC RESEARCH & SCHOLARLY
PAPER COMPETITION

TOP RESEARCH-IN-PROGRESS AWARD

Len O'Kelly

GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

CREATING RADIO'S "FARM SYSTEM": THE CASE FOR
SHIFTING COLLEGE RADIO FROM "STUDENT-RUN" TO
"STUDENT-OPERATED" IN INSTRUCTIONAL SETTINGS



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TOP PAPER

Casey Hart

STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY

ME OR THEE? AN EXAMINATION OF LYRICAL FOCUS
OF 2025 CCM SONGS



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William Anderson

CENTRAL MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

EARS ACROSS AMERICA: ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL
AD HOC AUDIO DRAMA EXHIBITION NETWORK



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Grace Provenzano

DES MOINES AREA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

GATE-SURFING: A NEW GATEKEEPING MODEL TO OBSERVE HOW
LOCAL NEWSROOMS ARE SELECTING STORIES AND NAVIGATING
THE TSUNAMI OF MIS-AND DISINFORMATION IN THE AGE OF AI



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Joseph Blaney

ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

PERSUASIVE ATTACK AND DEFENSE OF THE
“INDIANA BEARS”: SUBVERTING THE RUSTBELT
FROM JUST ACROSS THE STREET



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Kuburat Ayinde

ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

WHY DO YOUTH LISTEN TO CELEBRITIES AS
SPOKESPERSONS ON SOCIAL MEDIA IN AFRICAN
SOCIAL CHANGE DISCOURSE?



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George Daniels

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

ASSESSING “ADVANCING A CULTURALLY
PROFICIENT WORKFORCE”: A FIRST-YEAR REVIEW



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Sara Magee & Adam Kuban

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY MARYLAND &
BALL STATE UNIVERSITY

THE TIPPING POINT: TIME ALLOCATION,
“HIDDEN” SERVICE AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE
IN MEDIA-CENTRIC DEPARTMENTS



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Raja Das

OHIO UNIVERSITY

HISTORICAL BROADCAST JOURNALISM PROGRAM AS
A MEDIA LAW PEDAGOGICAL RESOURCE: A CRITICAL
DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF THE MACNEIL/LEHRER
REPORT: "THE A.C.L.U. AND THE NAZIS"