



2009 DPA Communicator of Achievement

Ralph J. Begleiter

Two Decades as CNN World Affairs Correspondent

Ralph J. Begleiter, Distinguished Journalist in Residence and the Rosenberg Professor of Communication at the University of Delaware, was named the 2009 Delaware Press Association Communicator of Achievement. He brings more than 30 years of broadcast journalism experience to classrooms for UD students interested in international affairs and broadcast journalism. He also directs the university's outstanding annual "Global Agenda" speaker series on international issues.

During two decades as CNN's world affairs correspondent, Ralph was based in the network's Washington Bureau, writing and producing thousands of news reports and programs that aired worldwide. He was the network's most widely-traveled reporter, logging nearly two million miles while visiting some 95 countries on 6 continents.

At CNN during the 1980s and 1990s, he covered U.S. diplomacy, interviewed countless world leaders, hosted the public affairs program "Global View," and co-anchored CNN's prestigious "International Hour." In 1998, he wrote and anchored a 24-part series on the Cold War. He covered many historic events at the end of the 20th century, including virtually every high-level Soviet/Russian-American meeting; the Persian Gulf Crisis in 1990-91; Middle East Peace efforts; and many UN and NATO summit meetings. In recent years he has hosted the Foreign Policy Association's annual "Great Decisions" television discussion series, aired on Public Broadcasting System stations.

What's Most Important in a Career That Has Spanned the Globe

Although Ralph has received numerous awards for outstanding coverage of politics and diplomacy around the world, he says, "What's most important in a career that has taken me from the remotest corners of the earth to the most sophisticated cities of the world still boils down to the people with whom I've worked over the years. Photographers and producers, other reporters, diplomats, politicians and military men and women. It's those people who remain constants, amid all the political shuffling and changes of assignments."

In 2004-2005, Ralph successfully used the Freedom of Information Act in the United States to prompt public release of hundreds of photos taken by the U.S. government of fallen American soldiers returning home in flag-draped caskets, one of the costs of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The World as His Classroom at the University of Delaware

At Delaware, he teaches undergraduate courses in "Media and Politics," "Broadcast News," "Crisis News," "History of TV News Documentary," and "Global Media & International Politics." But the former globetrotting journalist also offers special courses with the world as his classroom.

In January 2008, he led a class of UD students on a study-abroad program to Turkey, where they were exposed to the cultural and political diversity of that country. In 2006, his "Global Agenda" class met weekly by videoconference with students in Beirut, Lebanon, to discuss cross-cultural and media issues. In 2002 he took UD students to Cuba for the 40th anniversary of the Cuban Missile Crisis. And he has twice led a study-abroad program in Antarctica in photojournalism and geopolitics.

At UD in the fall of 2008, he and Professor Joe Pika taught the "Road to the Presidency," centered on presidential election campaigns and the media. He helped organize a major event at UD on election night in which more than a thousand students gathered to watch the election returns together, hear distinguished faculty presentations about key aspects of the election, and absorb information from a

wide variety of sources shown on nine large screens simultaneously. Student media (WVUD Radio and STN-TV) broadcast the event, and other students conducted a UD public opinion poll about the election.

Ralph says, "I get chills when I think of some of my former students at UD, now working as journalists at the *Wall Street Journal*, at CNN, at NPR, at NBC News, at the Center for Public Integrity, or at newspapers and television stations in New Jersey, North Carolina and Pennsylvania. And other former political science and international relations students now are working literally around the world, from Brazil to Dubai. *They* are what's most meaningful. I love it when they get back in touch to let me know what they're doing."