JCOM Welcomes a New Department Head

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Kim Hixson was born and raised in Chattanooga, Tennessee. His background consists of working in media, industry, government and education.

Kim earned the Ph.D. in journalism from Southern Illinois University. He also has a master’s degree in professional writing and a bachelor’s degree in advertising and English. Additionally, he graduated with an associate’s degree in broadcasting in the same ceremony with his mother who graduated with an economics degree.

Kim's experience in media includes being a television promotion manager and a writer/associate producer of training videos. He worked as a writer for an in-house advertising agency/communication department for a corporation and its subsidiaries. Prior to that position, he worked at a full-service advertising agency as a copywriter. In most of these positions, Kim's duties included doing public relations activities as well as advertising and promotions.

Kim has been working in higher education for more than 25 years. He has taught classes at the community college and university levels. Kim comes to Utah State University from the University of Wisconsin—Whitewater. He founded the advertising program there. His experience at UW—Whitewater includes serving as the coordinator of the graduate program in communication and as the chair of the communication department. He was active on campus serving many years on the executive committee of the faculty senate, serving on the foundation board and receiving the Excellence in Service Award from the College of Arts and Communication. His research interests include: uses and gratifications of media, social media use in election campaigns, and movie promotion.

An interest in community service led Kim to seek elected office. He was thrice elected to the Whitewater City Council and served a term as president of the council. He was twice elected to the Wisconsin State Assembly where he served as chair of the committee on colleges and universities. During his time in the assembly, Kim received a national award from Easter Seals for outstanding advocacy by a legislators.

Kim and his wife, Michelle, have three children. Ryan, who just graduated from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga in communication; Sally Kate, who will be a freshman in business administration and will play tennis at Illinois College; and Betsy, who will be a high school sophomore this fall. She is involved in theater, basketball and tennis. As these three have been very active playing basketball, softball, baseball and soccer, Kim has had a long career coaching their teams.

In addition to coaching, Kim enjoys playing golf, tennis and basketball. He has lots of fun reading about American history and watching documentaries. He likes to attend sporting events (especially those involving the kids) and likes going to movies. Kim has appeared in several movies, most recently as a featured extra playing a news reporter in both *Public Enemies* and in *Mr. 3000*.

The Hixson family is full of anticipation and excitement about their move to the beautiful Cache Valley. Kim is looking forward to becoming a part of the JCOM team and using his varied experience to help it grow its success.