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Apprentice House Combines Courses, Creativity, and Technology in Unique Teaching-Publishing Model

*Series of Classes, Forthcoming Titles, New Web Site
Herald Growth of Campus-Based Book Publisher*

MARCH 14, 2007 – While most publishers specialize in a certain niche, or maintain lists in a few focused categories, new titles from Apprentice House demonstrate the Baltimore-based publisher's flexibility and creativity.

Forthcoming books from the country's only campus-based, student-staffed book publisher include a memoir from a prison inmate serving a life sentence, a collection of winning essays from the first-ever Helen Keller Foundation writing competition, an insider's look at the deterioration of local television news broadcasting, a poetry chapbook, and an art book of select Daniel Berrigan poetry with an introduction by Howard Zinn and an endorsement from Kurt Vonnegut.

"We balance dual responsibilities as educators and publishers," said Dr. Kevin Atticks, affiliate professor at Loyola College in Maryland and Apprentice House's publisher. "Whether students enter the book business is secondary; they can demonstrate to any prospective employer an ability to develop, manage, and complete complex projects."

Founded in 2004, Apprentice House started as a mock company when the first book publishing course was offered at Loyola College. Students were assigned projects, some of which became viable, marketable books released under an imprint of an independent publishing company owned by Atticks. Now Apprentice House is an official nonprofit activity of the college's Communication Department, which offers three related courses: Introduction to Publishing, Book Design and Production, and Book Marketing and Promotion.

"Students essentially serve as staff," said Gregg Wilhelm, Director and Editor-in-Chief, who returned to his alma mater in Fall 2006 to guide the effort. "Acquisition editors in the intro class, then designers, and eventually marketers. But obviously not every project can be completed during a semester, and published books have a longevity well beyond a student's involvement. That's where the professional oversight comes in."

In addition to Atticks and Wilhelm, who possesses fifteen years of publishing experience, the effort is directed by founder Dr. Andrew Ciofalo and a Board of Directors made up of four other Loyola College professors.

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Students develop their own projects, work on content provided by Loyola professors, or take on manuscripts submitted by authors from outside the campus community. To date, ten books have been published, including a collection of never-before-published plays by Zora Neale Hurston discovered at the Library of Congress. Another ten titles are slated to be released by year's end.

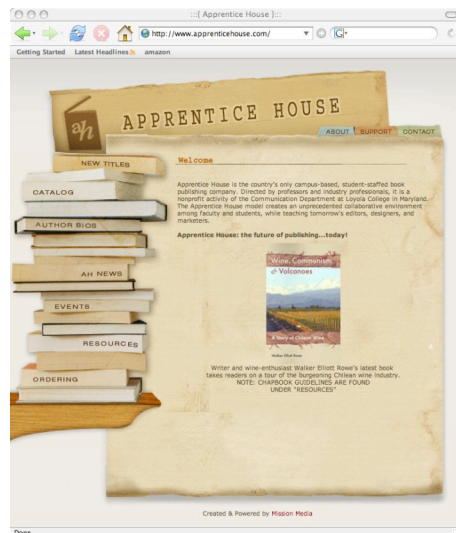
However, teaching stands as Apprentice House's main objective: if a project fizzles out, or only sells 100 copies, so be it.

Print-on-demand technology makes the model possible by eliminating risk, returns, and warehousing. Otherwise, Apprentice House operates like any other publishing house, creating a hybrid between a university press and an independent publisher.

"I decided to attend Loyola specifically because of the opportunity to be involved with a book project like *What Would You Die For? Perpetua's Passion*," said sophomore Nathan Zawie from Cleveland.

Zawie and students in Loyola's Classics Department translated the prison diaries of Perpetua—a young, female, second-century Christian martyr—from the original Latin. Then they collaborated with Communication Department students to design and publish the book, which was used as the text for Loyola's Spring 2006 Humanities Symposium.

(Wilhelm, Zawie, and Dr. Joseph Walsh, chair of the Classics Department, recently participated in a roundtable discussion on student-faculty collaborations in editing and publishing at the Northeast Modern Language Association conference in Baltimore.)



On the promotional side, a new web site created pro bono by multimedia design firm Mission Media serves as Apprentice House's primary marketing tool. Printing is done through Lightning Source, so titles are available to the trade through Ingram and to individuals through Amazon.com. An e-commerce component is being developed so that customers can also buy directly through the web site (ApprenticeHouse.com).

The main challenge involves promoting such an eclectic list.

"Students are drafting an array of marketing plans, depending on their project," said Wilhelm. "Some books will have broad, mainstream appeal, while others will do just fine with their targeted audiences."

Wilhelm said that three or four series are under consideration to establish categories of books that can be marketed to specific, likely academic, audiences, primarily as course adoption texts.



APPRENTICE HOUSE

SELECT FORTHCOMING TITLES:

Prayer for the Morning Headlines: On the Sanctity of Life and Death

Poetry by Daniel Berrigan

Photography and Selections by Adrianna Amari

Introduction by Howard Zinn

Tonight at Six: A Daily Show Masquerading as Local TV News

Michael Olesker, former commentator, WJZ-13, and columnist, *Baltimore Examiner*

Eager Street: A Life on the Corner and Behind Bars

Arlando “Tray” Jones, III

Introduction by Dr. Drew Leder, Professor of Philosophy, Loyola College

Reading Lips and Other Ways to Cope with a Disability

Winners of the First Annual Helen Keller Foundation Essay Writing Competition

Edited by Diane Scharper, National Book Critics Circle, and Professor of English, Towson University

Chapbook Contest

Poetry chapbook contest for poets previously unpublished in book form. Winner receives \$250 prize and 20 copies.

Flashes in the Night: The Sinking of the M/S Estonia

Jack Nelson, writer and Emeritus Professor of Journalism, Brigham Young University

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