

LEADS

Newsletter of the School of Journalism
and Mass Communication
Texas State University-San Marcos

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Chuck Kaufman, Editor

NPPA chooses Texas State

The National Press Photographers Association has selected the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Texas State to host its Advanced Storytelling Workshop in April 2009. Dave Nolan spearheaded the effort to bring this prestigious event to the University. Nolan traveled to Kentucky in April to present Texas State as an attractive host and welcomed Steve Sweitzer of WISH-TV in Indianapolis, chair of the workshop, to campus in May.

Dr. Oskam wins Telly

Dr. Judy Oskam's program, "Barry Lopez: Working Writer," won a 2008 Bronze Telly Award. The program was entered in the nonbroadcast education category. Dr. Oskam produced and directed the program with her colleague Melinda Goodspeed (photojournalist) at Texas Tech University. The program is available online at: <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/communications/barrylopez/>.

The 29th Telly Awards competition received more than 14,000 entries from ad agencies, production companies, TV stations, cable companies and corporations.

Final Impressions

The Texas State AAF team, winners of the District 10 competition, will present last among 18 finalists in the championships in Atlanta on June 8 and 9. Schools participating are: Emerson College, The George Washington University, Hofstra University, University of Virginia, Florida State University, Ohio University, Columbia College, Indiana University, Louisiana State University, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, Webster University,



By Rob Cartwright

— WASHINGTON
If you are planning a career in television news, hands-on experience is essential before getting that first job.

Many stations offer internships, but students need to go the extra mile to get the most of their time in the newsroom.

Every semester, I watch a new group of interns sit on our assignment desk answering phones. I hardly ever see them interacting with reporters, photographers or producers. They don't leave with material to send to potential employers, a contact that could help them get a job or even the knowledge of how a daily newscast is put together.

What they see as a resume builder is actually a wasted opportunity.

I owe my career to an internship I did at KSAT-TV in San Antonio while I was a student at Texas State. The key is to go out of your way to learn as much as you can in the short amount of time you have.

There are professionals in every area of the newsroom who are more than happy to help you learn, but they will not approach you.

You need to seek them out. For example, if you want to be a reporter, ask a reporter if you can help them on their story. If you want to produce, sit with a producer to learn how a newscast is shaped on a daily basis . . . even offer to help write a story or two and ask them to critique it. Sitting on the assignment desk should be the exception, not the rule.

At the end of your internship, you should leave with not only the knowledge that will help you stand out among the hundreds of applicants news directors get for each entry level position, but also the contacts. Word of mouth from professionals you work with during an internship is far more powerful to a potential employer than anything you put on paper or video.

Find, sharpen that competitive edge

Students finding the competition tough during this most competitive economy should take one piece of advice to heart — calm down.

Career coaches advise jobless graduates not to get distressed. Just adjust the search.

Perhaps you had your eye on that big job in the big job market. Consider a job at a smaller organization. If you previously were unwilling to move away from your home town, consider moving to a job nearby or — be adventurous — farther away from home.

Many students who say they can't find jobs probably conducted fairly narrow searches. Expand your network, including the alumni at Texas State University.

What's great about working at smaller companies is that you are very likely to get more hands-on experience than if you worked at a large firm.

Generally, your first job is mostly a stepping stone to a bigger job, which is

probably the job you wanted in the first place, the one with the big name in a big city.

Another facet of your job search is your preparation for the marketplace.

Here's the good news. There are jobs out there. It's just that there are more applicants than jobs, so your task in this competitive environment is to put yourself in a more competitive position. Do more homework. Understand the market. Study companies — who they are and what they do.

Aside from showing up for an interview with an appropriate appearance — dress professionally — polish your interviewing skills. Anticipate questions that will be asked and how will you answer them. The ease with which you answer questions will assure the interviewer that you've given a great deal of thought to your career and your preparation for it.

Aside from the skills you will bring to the job, the prospective employer is

looking at you as a team member. Show enough personality to allow employers to believe that you will be someone who fits into the firm, agency or news organization.

Again, you will want to sell your skills and yourself.

Finally, have the confidence to compete. No one expects to leave a college campus without *competing* for a job. Even in the most robust of economies, the jobs you consider the best are jobs that others want as well. You're going to have to polish your job-winning skills.

How can you show that you should be hired over someone else? What on your resume will differentiate you from someone else?

Perhaps you produce the winningest PowerPoints or are a wizard at InDesign. Perhaps you're bilingual.

Perhaps you have fresh ideas.

Perhaps you can tell a story in an entertaining way.

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Texas State University—San Marcos, University of Oregon, The Art Center Design College—Albuquerque, University of Nevada—Reno, University of Southern California and Texas Christian University.

Corbut, Swank finalists

Lauren Corbut and **Adam Swank** are finalists for a Lone Star Award from the Houston Press Club in the category of Broadcast TV & Radio News, Sports or Feature Story. There are only three spots in this category. We will know how they placed on June 6, when the awards dinner takes place at the University of Houston Hilton Hotel.

Professor Emeritus

Dr. Mike McBride has been approved by the Board of Regents as a Distinguished Professor Emeritus.

Second Place Honors

Dr. Cindy Royal received second place in the AEJMC/Mass Communication and Society Division and Graduate Education Interest Group award for Promising Professors in teaching.

Get involved on campus

Work experience is essential for professional development and winning that first full-time job. No doubt you will want to make internships off-campus part of your impressive resume.

However, don't forget the many fabulous opportunities on-campus. They will provide great satisfaction and work samples that you will be able to share with prospective employers.

Opportunities abound at Radio Station KTSW, The University Star, Bobcat PRomotions.

Another important part of your development is to join any number of student-run professional organizations. Bulletin boards in Old Main for Ad Club, Public Relations Student Society of America, the Society of Professional Journalists and the National Broadcasting Society are packed with information.

These organizations, as well as the other media organizations mentioned, will connect you with like-minded students and real-world professionals. Membership dues are fit for any budget and another important investment in your future. Your involvement will make your professional and college life richer.