

# The Cronkite Journal

2020-2021

WALTER CRONKITE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION

# A YEAR

## like no other

Cronkite meets  
pandemic challenges

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY





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Susan Smith Richardson of The Guardian U.S. is named the school's first Ida B. Wells Professor in Journalism.



Battinto L. Batts Jr., who took the reins of the Cronkite School on July 1, 2021, is surrounded by photos of Cronkite students who spent the better part of 18 months attending hybrid classes and professional programs to keep safe from COVID-19. While the students may not have always been in class in person during the pandemic, they were certainly there in spirit. Above and cover photo by Olivia Dow

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## Cronkite helps drive university mission

**A**t a time when American democracy and justice have been threatened by multiple challenges — voting rights, trust in elections and police shootings of Black citizens — the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication has been developing new programs, attracting new leaders, and rethinking its own structures in an effort to expand its response to the need for greater equity, diversity and inclusion.

Reflecting on the role of journalism to address societal inequities and serve as a bellwether to democratic principles — and then testing new ideas and finding positive solutions — is not an innovative mindset that should be limited to times of particular stress. Indeed, we look to the Cronkite School to be a leader in journalism education and journalism itself. Yet there's little doubt that the last year, especially amid the global pandemic, has required the school and its leadership, faculty and staff to think creatively and find new approaches to advance its mission.

Recognizing the threat of misinformation and the need for reliable, fact-based information in a well-functioning democratic society, Cronkite launched an undergraduate digital media literacy degree. This immersive online program, the first of its kind in the country, seeks to combat the spread of misinformation and disinformation by developing critical thinking, increasing global awareness and fostering ethical decision making in the analysis and use of digital media.

In an ongoing effort to work with students to develop professional investigative journalism skills, Cronkite's Howard Center for Investigative Journalism led a student team probing a 2019 shooting in Phoenix involving members of a Homeland Security investigation unit. The student journalists pieced together what happened by studying hours of video and audio of interviews with suspects, witnesses and federal agents as well as thousands of crime scene photos and audio of the shootout. Their investigation not only revealed that federal agents fired first in this case, it motivated reporting on other Homeland Security Investigations agents who were involved in shootings around the country. Their resulting multimedia product won a first-place collegiate prize from Investigative Reporters & Editors.

A sampling of faculty and leadership changes also highlights Cronkite's ongoing efforts to expand the school's commitment to justice, equity and inclusion — all of which I anticipate will lead to expanding perspectives



Photo by Deanna Dent, ASU

and insights that will both enrich the quality of the work Cronkite performs and the quality of the experience for Cronkite students. A few examples:

- **Susan Smith Richardson**, currently deputy editor at The Guardian and a media industry leader, has been named the inaugural Ida B. Wells Professor in Journalism. This professorship was named in honor of the African American investigative journalist, educator and early leader in the civil rights movement.
- **Adrienne Fairwell**, a seasoned leader with years of media, communications and public television experience, is the newly named general manager of Arizona PBS. She is the first African American GM in the station's 60-year history.
- **Vanessa Ruiz**, a former award-winning news anchor, is the new director for diversity initiatives and community engagement. Involved with recruiting and retaining diverse faculty, staff and students, plus first-generation college students, she also serves as the lead instructor for Cronkite's ethics and diversity courses.

These are exciting and turbulent times as colleges and schools across the university and beyond are pushing themselves to confront many of our society's greatest challenges. I look to Cronkite, a world-class leader in journalism education, to be one of the top drivers in this necessary push for positive change. ■

ASU President Michael M. Crow



## School readies for challenges, new opportunities

It is such an honor to address you as the dean of the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

First, I want to thank you. I have heard from so many members of the Cronkite Nation over these past few months. Your visits, calls, emails and handwritten notes have provided encouragement and inspiration and made me and my family feel welcomed and embraced. I am humbled by your confidence in me to meet the challenges of this important role at such a critical time in our society.

We face many challenges as an industry: lack of trust in media, misinformation, the evolution of local news, the continued need for more diversity. Some may declare the state of our profession a lost cause, but we cannot be among them. These challenges provide us with clarity of mission. The world needs more of Cronkite and all that it has to offer, and we must provide it.

Our accomplishments to date provide us much to reflect upon with great pride. The numerous awards won by students. The esteemed faculty we have recruited. The excellence with which Arizona PBS serves the community. Our research. Our professional programs. Our iconic and beautiful building.

There are many great programs of our kind, but there is only one Cronkite. Our uniqueness is in the spirit with which we have pursued our work under the guidance of strong leadership and vision as a unit of Arizona State University. We are aggressive innovators and entrepreneurs, passionate storytellers, principled pursuers of the truth and impactful communicators.

But we must not become comfortable atop this hill on which we stand. Everything we have done to this point has prepared us to confront the challenges before us. We have a responsibility to keep pushing, to keep leading, to keep inspiring.

To succeed, we must advance to the next stage — through a process of self-analysis and a shared vision for the future. We have a framework to guide us in this endeavor, which is both a lens to look inward at ourselves and the Cronkite community and to then turn outward to chart our journey.

- **Experience:** Our culture, curriculum, programs, facilities
- **Expertise:** Our journalism, research and critical analysis
- **Advancement:** Our brand management, fundraising, entrepreneurship
- **Access:** Our modalities for education and training



Photos by Isaac Easley (above) and Charlie Leight, ASU (left)

Moving forward, we seek to create and deliver a challenging and rewarding educational experience in an environment that is welcoming, inclusive, values diversity and empowers

everyone. We will serve our industry and communities with impactful and engaging journalism and advance understanding through relevant, timely research and analysis.

We will leverage our platforms and partnerships to make the Cronkite brand, and what it stands for, widely known by sharing our story and purpose. We will bring more people into our fold through a multitude of methods and modalities and an interdisciplinary, collaborative mindset.

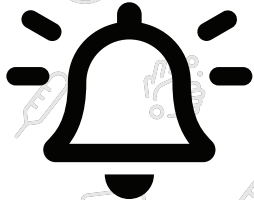
Through these and other means, we will not only confront the challenges we face, we will create new opportunities and set new standards. This is our responsibility as a leader in our craft.

The point from which we embark is one of strength and possibilities. Our enrollment is growing and our financial position is solid and promising. We are poised to expand our presence through exciting new programs in Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., and across the globe while continuing to attract inspired talent to our home in downtown Phoenix.

Our future is bright, and I'm excited about where we go and what we can achieve. Together. Let's do this. ■

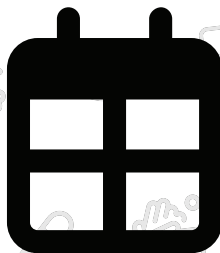
Dr. Battito L. Batts Jr.  
Dean

# Cronkite pivots to deliver quality education amid a pandemic

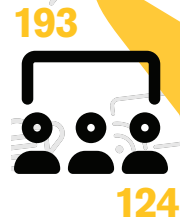


**The word came at 4:28 p.m. on a Wednesday in the middle of the 2020 spring break: All ASU classes would be taught remotely in response to the outbreak of the coronavirus.**

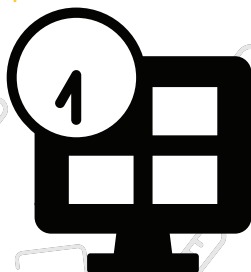
**Eighty minutes later,** Cronkite faculty members, many of whom had never taught online before, were signed up for a series of training sessions that would launch them into a strange new world.



**Over the next three days,** 124 faculty members teaching 193 in-person classes participated in a series of virtual sessions to learn not just the tools and technologies they would need to master by Monday morning, but to talk through how they would adapt their teaching methods for virtual classrooms.




**They spent the weekend** perusing an instructors' site, developed on the fly by Senior Associate Dean Rebecca Blatt, which was jam-packed with resources and suggestions, and they reassured their students that not only would instruction continue, but this would be a chance to create and innovate. Together, they would do what the best journalists and communications professionals have always done: Face the challenge and get the work done.



**At 7:30 a.m. on Monday morning, March 16,** the first students signed into their classes via Zoom. A team led by Senior Associate Dean Jessica Pucci and TJ Sokol and his IT staff were standing by in a makeshift fourth-floor command center, monitoring classes on a half-dozen screens and stepping in to offer technical help and guidance in real-time.





**And so began** the Cronkite School's rapid-fire response to an unprecedented challenge facing universities across the country: how to keep students safe during a pandemic while delivering a quality education.

It's one thing to teach an asynchronous lecture course or discussion-based course online. It's quite another to teach traditional journalism skills that way.

The Cronkite School is known internationally for delivering hands-on instruction through its "teaching hospital" model of education. The school offers 13 different professional programs that place students in newsrooms and labs to create news content and provide services to the university and the community. Students cover news from bureaus in Phoenix, L.A. and Washington, D.C., and produce a nightly newscast that reaches more than a million households on the main Arizona PBS channel. They create public relations campaigns and digital strategies for clients, produce national investigations and test new technologies.

Similarly, Cronkite classes are focused on teaching professional skills in addition to principles and values. Students learn a range of digital tools and technologies, from video editing to web design. Their instructors send them out daily to shoot video and photos, interview sources and go wherever news is happening, whether that's the statehouse, the border or a sports arena.

In the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak, those



courses all would have to be taught via a computer screen. Moreover, students could continue to report and produce digital and broadcast stories, but, for many months, they would have to do it without leaving their homes.

Faculty and staff scrambled to rearrange their lives to take care of loved ones who were ill or at risk and children who could no longer attend school or daycare. They set up home offices and got in line to upgrade their internet service.

And suddenly, the Cronkite building, always a bustling place, fell eerily quiet. It would remain that way for the remainder of the spring and through the summer. Cronkite held the first of three virtual graduation ceremonies at the end of the spring 2020 semester. Summer camps were cancelled, and summer reporting programs, like Carnegie-Knight News21 and the Howard Center for Investigative Reporting, were recast as remote experiences.

It wasn't until August that students, faculty and staff began to return to campus, following safety protocols that included hand washing, masking and social distancing. Students began to go back out in the field to report, but only with advance permission and careful restrictions. People reported their health status daily via an app developed by ASU, and they got tested for the virus at free ASU testing centers.

Throughout the fall semester and the following spring, classes were conducted in a hybrid format. Students could elect to participate remotely, or they could choose to attend in person. Faculty learned to teach while wearing a mask and simultaneously

addressing students on a screen and students in the classroom.

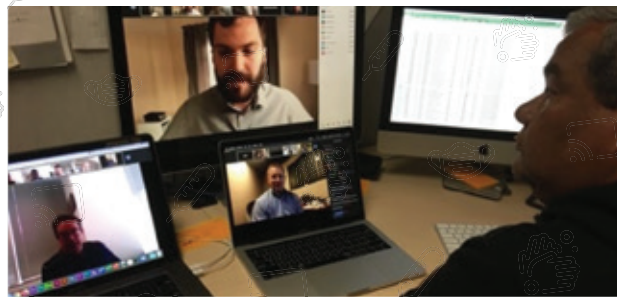
### None of it was easy,

but there also were some unexpected bonuses.

Fernanda Santos, the former Phoenix bureau chief for The New York Times, now teaches narrative writing and bilingual journalism at the Cronkite School. She tells her students they have to go where the story is, which is to say where the people are.

"From day one, I had been telling my narrative writing students that to be good narrative journalists, they had to get out of the office and spend time with their characters," Santos said. "When the coronavirus pandemic forced us to move our classes online and keep students from doing any field reporting, I had to figure out ways to allow my students to continue reporting."

On the first day of teaching remotely, Santos asked her students to brainstorm ideas. "One student, **Brendon Derr**, is writing about women video game developers and suggested playing video games with them online to get hints of their personality by observing how they react to other players," she said. "Another, **Megan Lupo**, who's writing about the forgotten history of African Americans in Phoenix, talked about using Google Earth to see what stands in places that used to be occupied



Above: Mark Hiralez (right), Cronkite systems support analyst, monitors Zoom classes on the first day of remote classes.



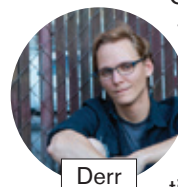
by cotton fields."

In a school-wide discussion board and via email and listservs, faculty began sharing a flood of ideas and resources. And in short order, students began reporting and conducting interviews using webcams, Facebook Live, Skype and Zoom. They recorded audio and shot video on their phones, wrote stories based on livestreams of Arizona House and Senate proceedings and attended virtual public safety conferences. They downloaded federal court documents, uploaded satellite images and scoured Google Earth.

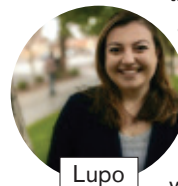
Cronkite Associate Professor Monica Chadha said students discovered there were many more ways of reporting and producing stories — even those that rely on images — than they had realized.

For example, she said a group of students working on a project about national parks decided to combine a video of a Skype interview with stock footage from the National Parks Service — providing appropriate credit. For another project, students made plans to record Zoom interviews with students about how they were adapting to remote classes and stitch them together for a package.

At Cronkite News, the news division of Arizona PBS, students launched a virtual

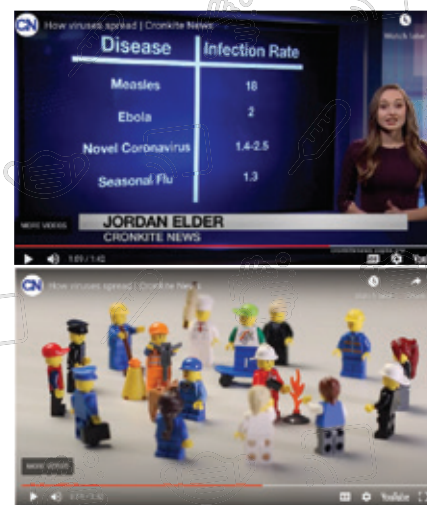


Derr

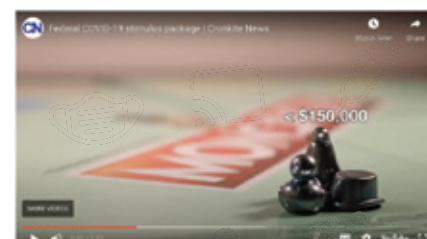


Lupo





Reporter Jordan Elder uses Lego mini-figures to show how viruses go viral for a Cronkite News report.



Cronkite News reporter Dylan McKim unearths a Monopoly board game and uses it to break down how a federal stimulus package would be distributed among Arizona families.



Student Marcella Baietto reports on a Phoenix family offering help during the pandemic.



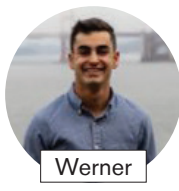
Evans



Lutes-Adloch



Beltran



Werner

newscast to replace the one they normally produce in state-of-the-art studios, and student reporters began churning out stories about the coronavirus's impact in Arizona for readers of Cronkite News.

Students used whatever tools they had at their disposal. Senior **Jordan Evans** led the way with a weather forecast delivered from his Phoenix apartment, sharing his computer screen to show maps and charts. Meanwhile, **MacKinley Lutes-Adloch** and **Jonmaesha Beltran** managed to report on the state's presidential primary from a distance, illustrated by a selfie from one of the voters they interviewed.

In the Cronkite News Sports Bureau, students who were no longer able to cover sports in person went to work on a new project to recount the best moments in Arizona sports history and told stories of how the coronavirus is upending the world of sports. Senior **Rob Werner** anchored the first remote episode of Cronkite Sports Now from his bedroom in San Francisco.

To assist students without access to quality internet service or computers, the school mailed laptops and hot spots to their homes. And working with Adobe, the school extended access to the Adobe Creative Suite so students could edit

audio, video and other files from their personal devices.

Faculty said they learned a lot from teaching remotely that they could apply when they returned to in-person classes.

"We picked up a lot of skills in terms of innovation," said Christina Leonard, executive editor of Cronkite News. "It did allow us to try new things; we were forced to. It was — I hesitate to use the word 'fun' because it was challenging — but, in the end, students were really grateful, and I think they showed we can do amazing work no matter what. And we're really proud of that."

Brett Kurland, director of strategic initiatives and sports programs, said he heard from one student who said she realized that recording video had become, for her, a kind of crutch. She told him, "Working without a camera has allowed me to focus on my writing, and I really grew more from learning in this environment," he said.

"In some ways, this has been good for us," said Kristin Gilger, who served as interim dean through the worst of the crisis. "Students learned the importance of being adaptable; they learned to be creative; and they learned perseverance. These are all life skills, and they're also skills that employers value. I think our students will be more successful than ever as a result."

**Teaching was just one part** of the challenge COVID-19 posed for the Cronkite School.

To quell concerns early in the pandemic and communicate a hundred details about



From top: Cronkite Associate Professors Monica Chadha and Sharon Bramlett-Solomon and Lisa Schmidtke, director of the Cronkite Public Relations Lab and professor of practice, prepare for their virtual classes.

how the school was responding, then Dean Christopher Callahan began holding meetings every day via Zoom with groups of students, faculty and staff. He sent out nightly emails with updates on everything from how to access textbooks to which local restaurants were offering takeout and delivery options.

After fielding questions from dozens of concerned parents, Callahan also set up a video conference specifically for them. More than 100 joined the first meeting although, Callahan quipped, “They weren’t nearly as proficient on Zoom as their children.”

The parent meetings were so popular that when Callahan left to become president of the University of the Pacific, Gilger continued the weekly gatherings. “We had 30 to 40 parents jump on every week for a year,” she said. “They asked great questions, and they had great suggestions. It made me realize just how important it is to keep those lines of communication open — regardless of what is going on.”

Assistant Dean Melanie Asp Alvarez sought ways to keep students active and engaged socially during a time when many were cooped up in their dorm rooms on campus or their childhood bedrooms at home and were feeling disconnected and alone.

Alvarez launched the “Cronkite CAFE,” a series of online social activities that included daily informal meet-ups to share lunch, talk to faculty and chat with each other.

One group met each week to talk about sports — and how much they missed

them. In another, students discussed their favorite shows on streaming services like Netflix and Hulu and swapped recommendations.

After observing that a number of pets were showing up in Zoom classrooms, Alvarez created “Pets of Cronkite,” inviting students to show off their animals. Students and faculty began meeting weekly for a virtual Cronkite book club. And two graduate students, certified yoga instructors, volunteered to teach Zoom yoga. Alvarez quickly took them up on it.

Instead of canceling regularly scheduled speakers and other events, the school began live-streaming them so that students could watch from wherever they happened to be. And Cronkite Career Services developed a Zoom series designed to give students career guidance and connect them with professionals. The first speaker was Chip Mahaney, lead recruiter at E.W. Scripps Co., the nation’s fourth-largest TV group.

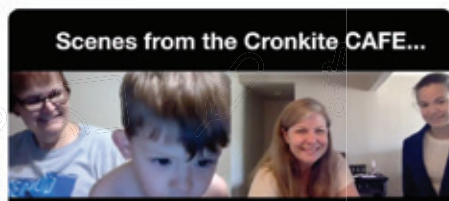
Students also got in on the act, posting screen pictures of themselves in classes, taking goody bags to students holed up in the dorms (while maintaining social distance) and hosting virtual dinners.

“I love that my j-school created a whole calendar of social, recreational and professional development virtual events for students to stay connected during this strange time — kudos to Cronkite,” one student posted on Twitter.

Cronkite “is doing this right,” senior **Mackenzie Shuman** posted. It “should be an example to other journalism schools out there. Thank you for helping my

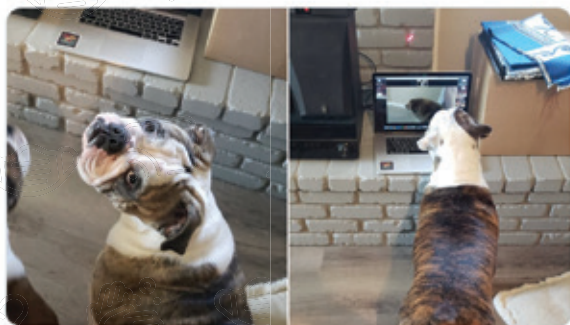


**Cronkite School** @Cronkite\_ASU · 5h  
Even the “Kids of Cronkite” can teach us a thing or two about audience engagement in the Cronkite CAFE! Check out our next meeting time here: [ow.ly/2Tsc50yTE6Q](https://ow.ly/2Tsc50yTE6Q)



**Cronkite School** @Cronkite\_ASU · Mar 21  
Introducing Cronkite Book Club! Join faculty, staff and students for a virtual chat about all things books. The first meeting is March 25 at 6:30 p.m. [ow.ly/ihiD50yS5c9](https://ow.ly/ihiD50yS5c9)

**Cronkite School** @Cronkite\_ASU · Mar 21  
Our first Pets of Cronkite was a success! If you couldn't join us today virtually, our next Pets of Cronkite meet-up is Tuesday at 1 p.m. (MST). Thanks, @Melanie\_ASU, for sharing these fun photos! | Zoom: [bit.ly/2U6iddD](https://bit.ly/2U6iddD) #CronkiteNation



**Cronkite School** @Cronkite\_ASU · Mar 22  
Missed our first digital yoga class with @chloeleejones and @hailieparkar? They'll be teaching classes Monday-Friday via Zoom during the spring semester. [ow.ly/RBYu50yS5mW](https://ow.ly/RBYu50yS5mW)

**Schedule** 📅:  
M: 6-7 p.m.  
T: noon-1 p.m.  
W: 8-9 a.m.  
TH: 6-7 p.m.  
F: 2-3 p.m.







Cronkite News team members attend a staff meeting via Zoom.

## Faculty undertake COVID-related research

Cronkite faculty responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by embarking on research projects that seek to shed light on the way public health information is communicated — and received — as well as other pandemic-related topics. Here's a sampling:

Professor **Joseph Russomanno** worked with **Ayesha Ashfaq**, a faculty member of Punjab University in Pakistan, to examine political cartoons that address pandemic themes.

Assistant Dean for Research and Associate Professor **Dawn Gilpin** and Cronkite doctoral student **Rian Bosse** conducted a global qualitative study of the kinds of media narratives that have developed about the pandemic.

Associate Professor **K. Hazel Kwon** and colleagues explored inequities caused and exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic, from housing insecurity to disabilities.

Assistant Professor **Syed Ali Hussain** researched COVID misinformation and other narratives, with a focus on the social-politics of medical misinformation on social media in Pakistan.

Assistant Professor **Jacob Nelson** analyzed how audiences have responded to pandemic coverage and how citizens' self-perceptions shape their approach to news and their trust in the news media.

Associate Professor **Leslie-Jean Thorton** worked with a colleague at Rutgers University to archive hundreds of newspaper front pages about COVID-19 and is working with Cronkite doctoral student **Nisha Sridharan** on a paper about political cartoons and narrative sense-making about the pandemic.

final semester in college be a success!"

The school's leadership also paid attention to how faculty and staff were managing from home. Recognizing that many of them were feeling stressed and isolated, the school offered training and resources on everything from how to set up a home office to the importance of taking breaks.

Dominic Valente, a Cronkite graduate who was teaching two sections of multimedia journalism when the pandemic broke out, said he was completely stressed out by the prospect of switching to remote teaching in a matter of days on top of being basically confined to his house.

But, then, two days into the new regimen, his students showed up to class — along with their dogs — and delivered a rousing rendition of "Happy Birthday" to his fiancé.

"Because of the resilience my students and the leadership show, I know we'll not only get through this, but we'll excel," Valente posted afterward on Twitter. "We got this!"

Elsewhere at Cronkite, faculty and staff turned their attention to what the school could do to support professionals on the frontlines of serving the news and information needs of communities.

The Knight-Cronkite News Lab collected and shared best practices for covering the fast-moving coronavirus story. A Corporation for Public Broadcasting leadership training program was reconfigured to help managers in public

media lead their staffs during a time of crisis.

Arizona PBS aired a live town hall with the governor, state director of health services and general of the Arizona National Guard just as a stay-at-home order went into effect. The program was simulcast on nearly 100 TV and radio stations statewide in both English and Spanish, reaching more than 1 million people, second only to the Super Bowl in Arizona audience size.

Arizona PBS also revised its entire daytime programming schedule to provide help to parents teaching their kids at home and expanded its nightly public affairs show, "Horizon," from half an hour to an hour to cover all things coronavirus, while also moving production of the show to host Ted Simons' home.

And then-Development Director Liz Bernreuter helped establish a new fund to assist students facing financial struggles as a result of the crisis.

Empathy, it turned out, was more important than ever.

Leonard, of Cronkite News, said her first concern throughout the pandemic was the safety of faculty and students. The second was that they felt supported. "I wanted them to know that we're there for them, that we were going to get through this together," she said.

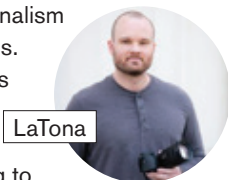
"Inspiration," she added, "is a big thing, too. I wanted our students, especially, to come out of our program inspired that they can do great things." ■

## Students make their reporting count during COVID

By Lisa Diethelm

Cronkite student **Franco LaTona** was looking forward to working in a newsroom filled with classmates and journalism students from other universities.

He imagined bouncing ideas off fellow journalists and ordering pizza for late



LaTona

night sessions. He was hoping to do some traveling as he reported on America's criminal juvenile system for the 2020 News21 investigative project, "Kids Imprisoned."

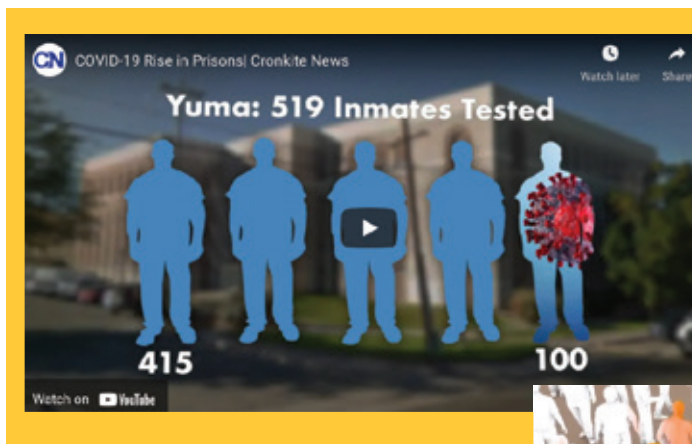
But when the coronavirus pandemic forced News21 to go virtual, LaTona and 34 other students in the summer reporting program found themselves working from their childhood homes, apartments and dorm room.

"I was pretty devastated, to be honest with you," he said. "But I recognize that I'm not the only one who's life was disrupted by COVID-19. Everybody's life was disrupted, so that's just the way in which mine was."

The students did more than make the best of things. They ended up writing and reporting 23 stories, 35 additional reports with photo illustrations, a seven-part podcast and several video stories, in addition to creating a sophisticated video animation to explain the school-to-prison pipeline that traps so many children.

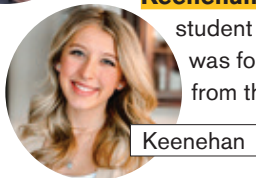
"That we were able to publish this project while working remotely from states across the country is a testament to the determination and dedication of each and every reporter on the project," News21 Executive Editor Jacquee Petchel said. "Even with travel bans prohibiting their field reporting, they found families and juvenile offenders still willing to share their stories and challenges, particularly in marginalized communities. They pivoted in every way possible to make this project come together."

The pandemic opened up an unusual



opportunity for student **Katelyn**

**Keenehan**. She joined a small student reporting team that was formed under a grant from the Henry Luce



Keenehan

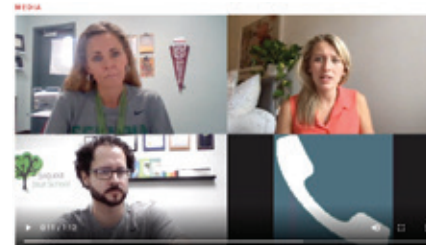
Foundation to document how people and communities were living their lives during the pandemic.

Keenehan focused on how inmates living in correctional facilities experience the pandemic for the project, "A Journal of the Plague Year: Southwest Stories Collection."

"I think it was one of the most valuable things I've done my entire college experience," she said. "The journalism world, at least at the college level, stopped a little bit during COVID-19, and having this outlet and having a support system gave me an opportunity to continue doing good journalism although we were in such a weird time in life."

During the almost six months they couldn't go into the field to report, students in the Cronkite Sports Bureau pivoted to stories they might not otherwise have done, said Paola Boivin, who directs the bureau. "They wrote about the leap in popularity of online chess, dug into the growing movement to legalize sports gambling in Arizona and examined the ethics of allowing fans back into sporting events ... stories that didn't require us to be at places but also demanded deeper reporting, research, reflection," she said.

The bureau also launched a new series, "Sports Rewind," a daily look back at big moments in Arizona sports history, and



Cronkite News reporter Katelyn Keenehan looks into the reasons behind a surge in COVID-19 cases among Arizona inmates.

created the "Coronavirus Sports Roundup" that tracked how COVID-19 was impacting the local sports community, from cancellation of high school events to pro athletes testing positive.

**Gareth Kwok**, who reported for the Cronkite News Phoenix Sports Bureau, said he used the remote experience to hone his sports writing skills.

Working from his home in California, he reported on baseball returning to the border town of Nogales and the effect the game has on the community.

"I've learned that there are still ways to get the story done, not talking face-to-face in person," he said. "You can still put out really good stories for people who want to read them." ■



Kwok



Diethelm



## The coronavirus pandemic thrust my ASU classes into remote learning. We thrived.

*This article is adapted with permission from a June 1, 2020, op-ed published in The Arizona Republic.*

Teaching college journalism remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic forcibly separated me from my students, who scattered from Mexico to Canada and throughout the U.S.

To my surprise, I got closer to them.

The intimacy of entering their homes twice a week revealed things I might not have learned in a traditional classroom. I learned a student's sister is a nurse whose hospital did not have enough N95 masks, that a student's father was delivering mail without protective gear, and that another is dating a San Francisco 49ers wide receiver.

I also learned that my undergraduate and graduate students, including a "dreamer" and a former U.S. Marine staff sergeant assigned to a reconnaissance unit in Iraq, were capable of submitting excellent work despite the sudden upheaval.

My curriculum did not change, although some of the ways students completed assignments did.

At first, I was terrified. Teaching remotely for me involved a live classroom with 33 students at a time. That's a lot of little boxes displayed across multiple screens. It's easy to get lost as you navigate those screens while monitoring student live chat.

At the beginning of one class, I played the final moments from the movie "JoJo Rabbit," in which the only piece of dialogue is: "What do we do now?" The response of the two characters, who realize the war has ended in Germany, is to slowly nod their heads and move their hips until they're both dancing with confidence and joy.

I told my students, "We are going to dance through the rest of the semester. I am just not sure of all the steps right now."

Students in my reporting class were prohibited from leaving their homes to tell their stories. They would no longer have access to the school lab's equipment. But

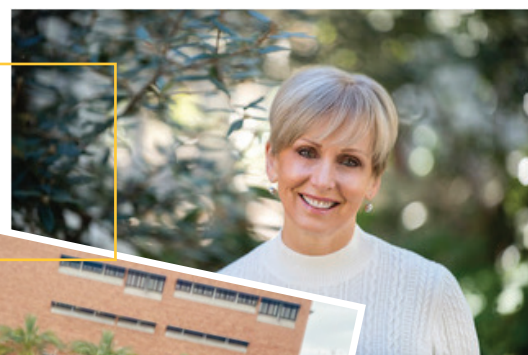
they still had to deliver clear pictures and crisp sound from their phones and laptops. The writing had to have focus and structure — the very things their lives now seemed to lack.

Their first quarantined assignment was a video diary called "Life in Coronavirus Land." One student opened her piece with a shot of her alarm clock and the caption, "Time to do nothing AGAIN." Her track said she didn't know what day it was, she had lost all three of her part-time jobs, and this self-realization: "I miss social structure."

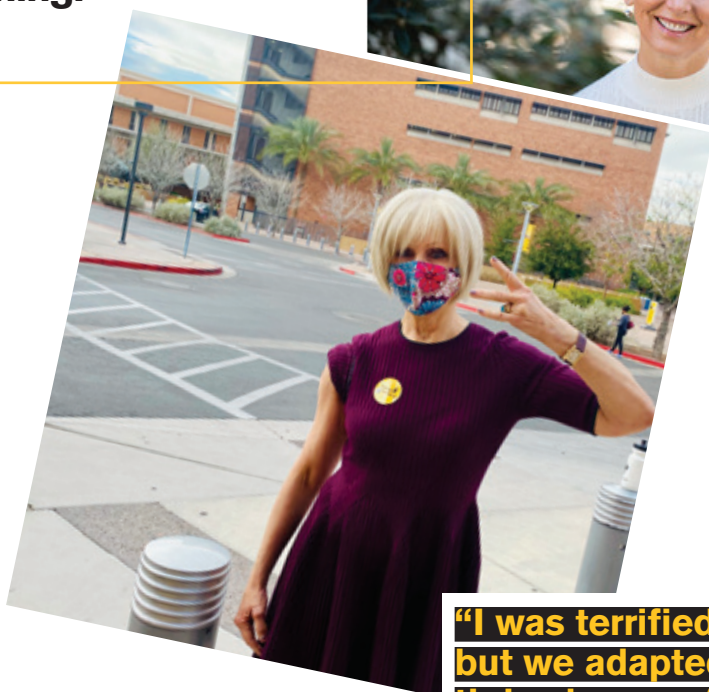
The classes helped give the students — and me — some of the normalcy we craved. We learned the pros and cons of teleteaching together. I reminded students to mute their microphones but not their cameras; I wanted to see them.

My business journalism class had to do group presentations — now in different time zones — on how to improve content and increase revenue at two news outlets. They were still expected to give a seamless presentation before managers from those very organizations.

They did. So much so that the chief strategy officer at a Midwest radio group asked students to contact him directly to



Photos courtesy of Susan Lisovicz



**"I was terrified to start, but we adapted and thrived, even. And the experience itself proved to be a lesson."**

**— Susan Lisovicz**

work with him on one of those ideas.

There was always the fear that the internet would go down. It did — just before class. I hosted a class with 37 people on my phone thanks to several urgent consultations with the trained therapists also known as the school's IT staff.

All this adversity provided a valuable life lesson. My students had to adapt and perform in spite of unwelcome living arrangements, restraints on their social lives and endless questions. What about my summer internship? Are there going to be any jobs when I graduate? And when can I go out with my friends again for Taco Tuesdays in Tempe?

We didn't know all the steps when we were first thrust into the remote classroom, but by semester's end, we were dancing in sync. ■

*Susan Lisovicz is the Donald W. Reynolds Visiting Professor at the Cronkite School.*



## Student interns find ways to report on communities they've never seen

*This article is adapted with permission from poynter.org, where it was originally published Sept. 9, 2020.*

By Agya K. Aning

It would have been so much simpler for **Natalie Walters** to report on looted Dallas businesses were she actually in the city as planned. Instead, she had to cover them from more than 900 miles away in her hometown of Augusta, Georgia. What's more, her firsthand knowledge of the place consisted only of passing through once before on a road trip.



Walters

Like myself, and several other news interns I spoke to, Walters spent her summer reporting on a place she didn't know at all.

In late March, Walters and I started texting back and forth about whether to accept our remote reporting internships. I was to work for the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, even though the closest I have been to the city is St. Louis, some 360 miles away. She was picked for The Dallas Morning News.

Walters and I are both obtaining our master's degrees in investigative journalism at Arizona State University, and we were looking forward to traveling to unfamiliar cities and using everything we learned over the previous two semesters.

"It was hard to accept and adjust my expectations," Walters said. "I was growing increasingly excited about exploring Dallas, about working in a real newsroom, about meeting my editor and about meeting other interns. And then overnight that was all taken away."

She feared working remotely would be a wasted opportunity, as did I, and consulted with family, friends and faculty about deferring until she could report in person. But seeing reporters around the country continuing to produce high-quality journalism, while working under the same constraints, inspired her. Also, this remote reporting thing could be a useful skill to have, since there was no telling when things would return to normal.

Walters was nervous when she started at the Morning News because she was afraid of coming off as ignorant to readers. So she read the paper's coverage, studied the city's Wikipedia page and watched travel guides on YouTube. Once work began, she took part in twice-weekly workshops in which seasoned reporters gave newbies a rundown of the area.

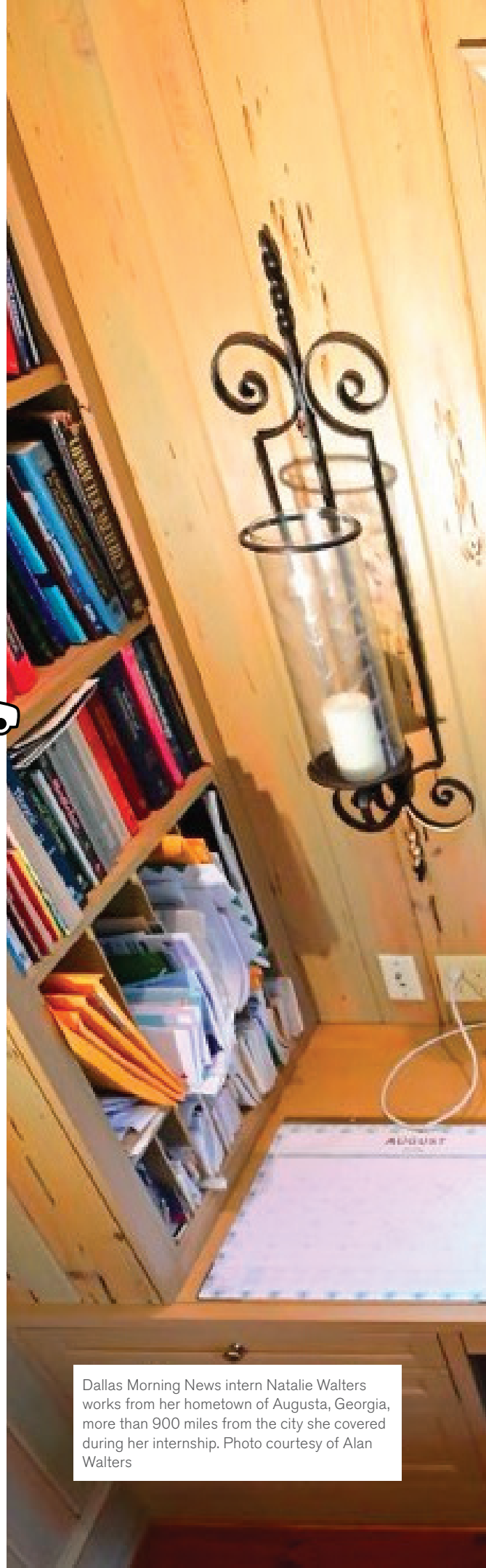
When reporting on the aftermath of looting in Dallas, she reached her first business owner by searching social media for damaged shops. That person then put her in touch with other entrepreneurs affected by the demonstrations. After that, Walters said, she began calling random establishments in the general vicinity to gain a picture of the previous night's destruction.

For her effort, she landed on the paper's front page — her third week on the job.

Dana Brandt, a senior at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, interned with the investigative team at the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. Had we been working under normal conditions, we would have bumped into each other again and again. Instead, our interactions



900 miles



Dallas Morning News intern Natalie Walters works from her hometown of Augusta, Georgia, more than 900 miles from the city she covered during her internship. Photo courtesy of Alan Walters







Intern Natalie Walters works on an assignment for the Dallas Morning News. Photo courtesy of Alan Walters

were reduced to small talk on Microsoft Teams before virtual staff meetings.

Although Brandt lives in Wisconsin, she was only vaguely familiar with Milwaukee. She developed a mindset as the summer went on: "Don't be afraid to ask questions and be really upfront when you're confused about something," Brandt said. "It's fine. I'm here to learn and I shouldn't be afraid of that." That mantra came in handy when she had to track and continually update a story on marches proceeding through streets she couldn't name or even recognize.

Still, she said, "Getting to work during such a crazy, historic time and getting to write about something like the coronavirus has been, if anything, more of an opportunity."

The distance pushed me to become more resourceful online. For one of my stories, my

## Students ace Zoom interviews to land internships

Just a few weeks after the pandemic shuttered the campus in spring 2020, sophomore **Ellie Borst** interviewed for five internships at three different companies — all without leaving her bedroom.

Borst was one of 56 students who participated in the school's first virtual internship day, using Zoom to connect with news organizations throughout the Valley. Each semester, Career Services Director Michael Wong and his staff hold three internship interview days during which employers meet with students in person. Over the course of a year, they place nearly 500 students in semester-long digital, print, broadcast and public relations posts.

Moving hundreds of interviews to an online format was a daunting prospect, but Wong was determined that the pandemic wouldn't stop students from getting placements.

"My fingers were crossed that this would work according to plan," Wong said. "And



Michael Wong

other than some temporary password issues, it did." Since then, Wong and his staff have hosted six virtual internship days and placed just as many students as before the pandemic.

While the fear was that internship opportunities would be reduced due to the pandemic, that didn't turn out to be the case, said Becca Smouse, a Career Services program coordinator. Employers have been looking for students who are able to work effectively in a remote environment, and students are ready, she said.

Smouse believes virtual work is here to stay, and that "gives Cronkite students who have completed a virtual internship experience an edge as they enter the job market," she said. "They already know what to expect."

The virtual interview format does require some special considerations, Wong said.

He tells students they need to do everything they would normally do before a face-to-face interview — finalize resumes and portfolios, practice how they will present themselves and their experiences, research the companies to which they are applying, and think about how they can contribute to the organization.

He also makes sure students know they still need to dress professionally — no pajamas or shorts allowed — and they need to carefully plan where they will do the interviews.

"We remind students to be in a quiet room with no distractions as well as to have good lighting and framing and to make sure their internet connection is working properly," Wong said.

"This extraordinary time led us to try something we've never done before," he added. "Kudos to our students, staff and our employer partners for successfully adjusting and adapting to the historic circumstances." ■



Borst



Sadikovic

*Students Dzevida Sadikovic and Courtney Bush contributed to this story.*



Bush



editor tasked me with finding a new boat owner. I thought it would be simple enough to call some shops and hope for a generous manager to connect me with a buyer. No such luck. I checked boat shop reviews on Google, but found no way to directly connect with commenters; I looked on Yelp, but there wasn't anything recent enough; I rummaged through message boards in vain. (I may have even done some light praying.) Finally, I found someone by backgrounding the name behind an enthusiastic Google review. Success.

There were also clear and widely agreed upon downsides. One was the difficulty of finding storytelling details from a distance. "It's hard to add color from a Zoom interview," Walters said.

The most significant loss was the opportunity to form stronger relationships

with colleagues — the socializing and chance encounters innate to any newsroom were nearly impossible to recreate. But in my experience this summer, I found the mentorship program created by a collaboration between the Chips Quinn Scholars Program and Gannett, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel's parent company, was effective in filling part of that gap.

Overall, the summer remote reporting interns found that good work is still possible but with some caveats. Details like body language can slip through the cracks, and investigative stories may still require a journalist to go somewhere in person. But when I read their work, it's impossible for me to tell whether Brandt or Walters reported from their couches while wearing sweatpants.

It's possible there's never been a stranger time to enter journalism. But our initial reservations about remote reporting dissipated as we learned to do what would have been not only impermissible just a few months ago, but also unthinkable. And we are better journalists for it.

"I would definitely redo it," Walters said. "I would do it over 100 times." ■

*Agya K. Aning graduated from the Cronkite School in 2020 with a master's degree in investigative reporting. He is now environmental justice reporter at InsideClimate News.*

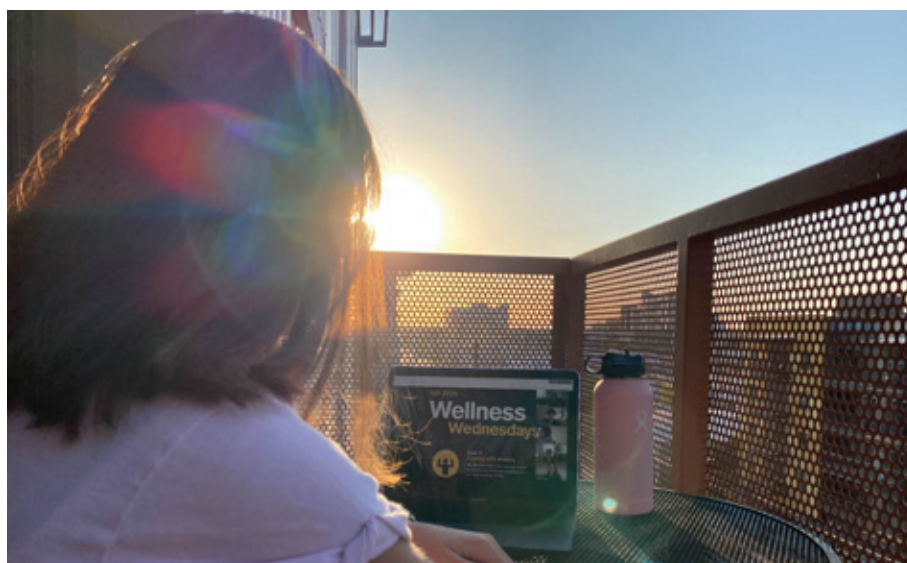
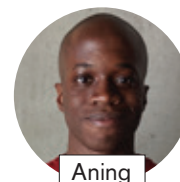
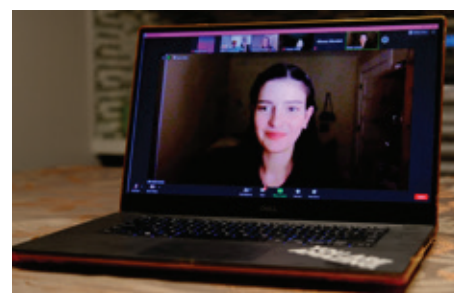


Photo by Tobias Rein



Jasper Larson, ASU peer health educator, conducts a virtual "Wellness Wednesday" session. Photo by Russell Prim

## "Wellness Wednesdays" helps students cope

By Dzevida Sadikovic

A few months into the pandemic, it was clear that Cronkite students could use some extra support as they navigated an entirely new kind of college experience.

Cronkite Assistant Dean Melanie Asp Alvarez and Director of Student Success Mary Cook came up with an answer in the form of "Wellness Wednesdays," a series focused on how to stay physically and emotionally healthy.

Sessions addressed such topics as anxiety, exercise, meditation, stress,

handling money, healthy eating on a budget, mindfulness, growth mindset, yoga, self-care for journalists and substance abuse.

The series also sought to address the stigma surrounding mental health counseling.

"My goal was to let students know that going to counseling is not a negative thing, but can help them work through tough times," Alvarez said.

The sessions also gave students the opportunity to meet and talk with each other about their experiences and learn about other ASU resources.

One student who participated commented that she learned "how important it is to allow myself to quiet my thoughts and process them, knowing that I'm not on a deadline and I can just be still."

Cook said among the most popular sessions were "Shifting to Growth Mindset" in fall 2020 and an in-person campus visit with a group of therapy dogs in spring 2021.

The plan, she said, is to continue offering "Wellness Wednesdays" even after the pandemic to help students face the stresses of academics, job interviews, internships and story deadlines.

"Not everybody is going to get into yoga, not everybody is going to get into mindfulness, but they are all going to breathe," Cook said. "And taking a minute to just sit and calm their breath can make a big difference in their day." ■



## PBS educational resources fill gaps for parents, teachers

**Arizona PBS has always been the go-to place for children's educational programs, but the station's educational mission took on a whole new dimension when COVID-19 forced schools to move to virtual teaching.**

And it wasn't just teachers who were affected; parents of children from preschool through high school were suddenly responsible for overseeing at-home learning.

"Arizona PBS had to pivot, and pivot quickly to fill a desperate need for both parents and teachers," said General Manager Adrienne Fairwell. "That became our No. 1 priority."

The station's educational outreach team ramped up resources on the station's digital platform, Arizona PBS Learning Media, adding dozens more videos, lesson plans and exercises. On air, the station offered 11 hours of at-home learning programs daily on two channels — one for early learners and the other for grades 6-12.

A weekly schedule guide links on-air and web-based resources so that after children view something, they can apply what they learn by taking part in an activity or exercise.

The idea, said Kimberly Flack, director of education and community impact for Arizona PBS, is to "encourage students to have a more visual, project-based experience rather than just reading lessons in their textbooks."

The "At Home Learning" website has hundreds of teaching suggestions, ranging from fun activities for younger children like how to create a telescope out of a paper towel roll and multimedia lessons on topics like the historical significance of the Gettysburg Address.

Math, social studies, science, geography and art are all covered, with much of it related to existing PBS programming like



Tate Peterson, 17, a Bioscience High School student in downtown Phoenix, learns about NASA's Apollo program through the Arizona PBS "At Home Learning" online portal.

"Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood" and "The Odd Squad."

"It's the stuff left over from making a TV show," Flack said. "That's the stuff that teachers and students want because it's behind the scenes."

"I love the videos," said Samantha McCormack, a kindergarten teacher in Bullhead City, Arizona. "There are so many vocabulary lessons I can use with my students; there's something for everyone."

For older students, there's a collection of materials focused on media literacy and spotting misinformation online. One video, "5 Ways to Spot Fake News," includes animations that help viewers learn to watch for unusual URLs, websites with anonymous contributors and sensationalist images. Another series focuses on civic engagement and first-time voting.

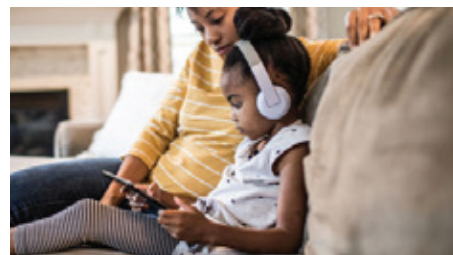
In addition to content produced by the PBS network, some programs come from member stations around the country. Kentucky Education Television recently produced a series called "You Are Not Alone," focusing on children's mental health issues. Vegas PBS added STEM elementary content, notably a video on one of the largest U.S. solar power systems at the Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada.

Arizona PBS offered a five-part series produced by the Salt River Project on Arizona's watershed and a one-hour film, "Racing the Rez," which follows Navajo and Hopi cross-country runners from rival high schools as a way of exploring the

complexities of modern life on a reservation.

Some of the content is aimed specifically at teachers. A series called "Tools for Anti-Racist Teaching," for example, includes more than five hours of videos for instructors and an hour-long video specifically for young learners.

"We hope teachers will utilize this series and find it helpful when discussing difficult topics on race in the U.S.," Flack said.



For students without internet access at home, educational programming is available daily on Arizona PBS channel 8.4.

For more, visit [azpbs.org/kids-and-education/at-home-learning](https://azpbs.org/kids-and-education/at-home-learning). ■

*Student Franco LaTona contributed to this report.*

LaTona







## Cronkite's new dean 'the right leader at the right time'

**Battinto L. Batts Jr.'s passion for journalism began when he was 8 years old. His cousin had been captured by rebels in Beirut and held hostage.** Family members huddled close to the TV and radio day and night for any news about the fate of the young Army colonel. His cousin was released after 13 days, but Batts would never forget the experience.

It would be his first lesson in the importance of the press.

Almost five decades and a stellar journalism career later, Batts remains closely connected to the profession. He has deep experience in reporting, editing, education, administration and philanthropy — all focused on a singular mission: protecting and advancing the Fourth Estate.

On July 1, 2021, Batts stepped into his new role as dean of the Cronkite School. Within a few days, he announced that Cronkite would focus its efforts on five major goals: save local journalism and prevent the spread of news deserts; teach journalists and citizens how to recognize misinformation and disinformation; expand the school's investigative reporting programs; promote diversity, equity and inclusion in journalism and beyond; and hoist the Cronkite flag throughout the globe.

It might be a tall order for some, but not for Batts, say close friends and family members. Those who know him best — from his mother to his wife to longtime colleagues — all ardently agree: When Batts puts his mind to something, there is no stopping him.

Batts was born in Ettrick, Virginia, to parents who were obsessed with education and information. He was the oldest of three boys, and all were expected to read two newspapers a day and get good grades — or

forfeit extracurricular activities.

Batt's mother, Carolyn Pearlingi, said her son showed persistence from the time he was a toddler and had to wear a full-body cast with a metal bar between his legs to correct a problem with his knees. Learning to walk again required regaining strength and trust in his legs. To his parents' surprise, he was moving about the house with no fear of falling within days of the cast coming off.

"He never gave up. He would always figure out what he had to do," Pearlingi said. "I've never known him to stop trying to get what he wanted."

Pearlingi said her son was unfazed at being among a small group of students of color in his grammar school. He learned to make connections across ethnicities and social backgrounds, singing in the choir, serving as a student lector and starting his own lawn-care business. In high school, he was a self-described marginal athlete on the baseball, football and basketball teams, but learned the value of teamwork, coaching and putting people in positions to win. His love for writing was nurtured by his English teachers, and it would lead to him finding his life's purpose.

Batts got his first taste of journalism in the Urban Journalism

## Conversations with Dean Batts

### What was your first job?

I launched a lawn-care business when I was in the 6th grade and ran it until I graduated from high school. At its peak, I had about 10 customers and earned a few hundred dollars a month. I liked being able to set my own schedule.

### Who has been your greatest mentor? What did he or she teach you?

My parents, of course, but most specifically my dad. The further I have gone in my career and life, the more I see the power of his influence and example. He was also a college administrator who worked in career planning and placement. He was driven by a desire to create opportunities for students and was a tremendous networker and connector of people. He passed away much too early in 2018, and I wear his ring on a chain around my neck. I often rub it when thinking and seeking inspiration.

### What was your favorite course in college?

Statistics. It was the only math-related course where I excelled, and that's because it taught me how to use numbers to tell stories.

### What's your most memorable interview as a journalist?

When I was an intern at the Richmond Times-Dispatch, I had to do a story on famous former Boy Scouts. I looked up a list of former Scouts and found the contact information for H. Ross Perot. I called, left a message at his office, and then went out to grab lunch. I returned and the newsroom receptionist was excited because Mr. Perot had called for me. I called back, got him, and he spent 30 minutes with me, telling me how the Boy Scouts had shaped his life. I knew he was a successful businessman, a billionaire, and expected him to be short with me, but he was very down to earth. This was a couple of years before he ran for president. It was the first time I interviewed someone famous.

### What do you consider your biggest accomplishment in journalism?

Playing a role in helping emerging journalists start their careers and providing advice and guidance to help them navigate their way to promotions and greater responsibility. It is rewarding to see former students on TV or in other high-profile roles committed to bringing along others because someone helped them. I am here because someone helped me along the way.

### If you could go back in time, what advice would you give your college-age self?

Be prepared for an interesting ride in your career, one that will take you places that you can't imagine, so buckle up and enjoy it all.

### If you could have only three things while stranded on a desert island, what would they be?

A pen, a notebook and my wife. We could come up with a plan for how to survive and how to get off the island. And while we worked on that we could document the process for how couples can work together to solve problems.

### What excites you the most about living in Arizona?

The energy and growth of the region, the proximity to so many wonderful places and things, and, of course, the sunshine. I love the sunshine. And I am not worried about the heat. Bring it on. ■

**"The opportunities before us require bold thinking and leadership. Sometimes we will pioneer and go at it alone; other times in collaboration, but always with excellence and in service to the mission."**

**— Battinto L. Batts Jr.**

Workshop, a program sponsored by the Dow Jones News Fund for aspiring high school journalists. His first story, about older students returning to college to earn their degrees, earned the workshop's best news story award.

At 18, Batts entered Virginia Commonwealth University, where he earned a bachelor's degree in mass communications and where he met Malcolm Holmes, his college roommate, fraternity brother and longtime friend.

Holmes, now marketing director at the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg, Virginia, described Batts as "driven, fearless and compassionate — a servant leader who opens doors for others."

"Timing is everything, and the Cronkite School has the right leader at the right time," Holmes said. "Batts is one of the smartest people I know. He is also one of the most driven. He is a consummate professional, and failure is not an option for him. As dean, he is going to do everything in his power to elevate the Cronkite School to heights unseen."

Batts worked for 18 years at newspapers that include the Richmond Times-Dispatch, the Virginian-Pilot, the Tampa Bay Times, the Daily Press in Newport News, Virginia, and the South Florida Sun-Sentinel.

David Nitkin, chief of staff and senior director of administration for Howard County General Hospital/



Photo by Charlie Leight





Photo by Charlie Leight

Johns Hopkins Medicine in Baltimore, Maryland, said he got to know Batts 30 years ago at the Sun-Sentinel, where they both covered the Broward County real estate boom after Hurricane Andrew decimated southern Florida. They have been friends ever since.

Nitkin described Batts as principled, disciplined and committed. “He has had to work as hard as anyone and also serves as a remarkable role model about how perseverance leads to success,” he said.

Batts pivoted to higher education when he joined the faculty of the Scripps Howard School of Journalism and Communications at Hampton University in Virginia. He directed the university’s William R. Harvey Leadership Institute and then returned to the journalism school as the assistant dean for academic affairs. While at Hampton, he earned his Ph.D. in higher education management.

Most recently, he served as director of journalism strategies for the Scripps Howard Foundation in Cincinnati, Ohio, where he managed journalism initiatives and funding priorities and oversaw the Scripps Howard national journalism awards program. He also played a pivotal role in the development of grants that fund the Howard Centers for Investigative Journalism at the Cronkite School and the University of

Maryland.

Within two years, he was a candidate for the dean’s post at Cronkite. It was a strong pool, according to the search committee chair, but Batts rose above all “due to his experience, vision and personality.”

“His diverse experience on all sides of the journalism and communication professions was unique and profound,” said Douglas Sylvester, dean emeritus of the Sandra Day O’Connor College of Law and head of the search committee. “In addition, his student- and research-centered vision for Cronkite is one that the committee and university find exciting for the future of the profession. Finally, Dr. Batts’ personality, at once commanding and collaborative, is the ideal set of skills for taking Cronkite, and journalism, into the future.”

Batts has a cadre of fans, but his biggest may be his wife, Tamala J. McBath, whom he calls his best friend. The couple share four daughters — Lyndsay, Mayah, Olivia and Jourdan — and a grandson, Brycen.

McBath said her husband is a natural collaborator and connector, with the ability to reach across barriers and find ways to bring people together.

“Battinto loves people,” she said. “He loves being a resource and he loves seeing people grow. That passion spills over into everything he does. He is a master at

amassing resources and then using them to benefit others. I affectionately call him my ‘partner in service.’”

McBath described her husband as driven, compassionate, meticulous and with “an uncanny way of pulling concepts out of the air, organizing them and executing them. For the average person, it could be a passing idea, but not for Battinto. He will ruminate on it — then suddenly there’s a model on the wall, and then his vision becomes reality.”

It is precisely those traits that McBath said will elevate both the Cronkite brand and the journalism profession.

**“It is his lifelong passion to be in a position that not only benefits others but also the profession he loves. He has a vision for where journalism needs to go, and he wants to be a catalyst for change,”** she said.

“His passion for journalism is not only about his heroes of the past but about his responsibility to prepare the next generation to carry the profession forward. This will be his legacy.” ■

## Founding Cronkite dean leaves a legacy of profound change

**In his 15 years as dean of the Cronkite School, Christopher Callahan accomplished more than what anyone thought possible.**

He more than tripled the size of the full-time faculty, recruited some of the nation's leading journalists, oversaw the design and transition to a new state-of-the-art journalism building in downtown Phoenix, dramatically increased the quality of incoming students as well as their retention and graduation rates, created more than a dozen immersion programs to give students professional-level experiences, launched the school's burgeoning online degree programs, grew Arizona PBS into one of the nation's leading public television stations, won more national journalism awards than any other school in the nation, and raised millions in grants and gifts to support the school.

"It's astonishing," said Douglas A. Anderson, who directed the program from 1987 to 1999.

Anderson remembers when, in the spring of 2005, a nervous desk clerk at a hotel in Miami handed him a slip of paper with a message from Walter Cronkite. Anderson went to his room and made the call.

"What can you tell me about this Callahan chap?" Cronkite asked him.



Anderson had plenty to tell him, and shortly thereafter, Callahan was named founding dean of Cronkite, which had just been transformed from a program within another college to a stand-alone school.

Over the next decade, Callahan would add two more titles: CEO of Arizona PBS and Vice Provost of ASU's Downtown Phoenix Campus. In July 2020, he assumed the presidency of the University of the Pacific in Stockton, California.

Callahan already was an experienced administrator when he arrived at Cronkite.

For 15 years, he had worked at the University of Maryland's Philip Merrill College of Journalism, first as director of Capital News Service in Annapolis, a public affairs reporting program for students, then as assistant dean and associate dean. He also was a senior editor and regular contributor to the national magazine, *American Journalism Review*. There, he worked with Rem Rieder, the magazine's editor and vice president.

"He's a brilliant administrator, but underneath it, he's got the soul of a journalist," Rieder said.

Callahan developed that soul by writing for his high school and college student newspapers and later covering Washington for the *State News Service* and *The Associated Press*.

He brought to Cronkite a newsman's sense of urgency, a reverence for

the role of media in a democracy, and an unwavering commitment to students.

"Every decision he made in 15 years was driven by what was best for students," said Kristin Gilger, who worked with Callahan as assistant and associate dean and became interim dean when he left. "Students have always been his highest priority, and there is truly nothing he is more passionate about."

Early in his tenure as dean, Callahan heard that some first-year students would be spending Thanksgiving alone in their dorm rooms. They either couldn't afford to fly home for the holiday or they didn't have families to go to. Callahan promptly invited them all to have Thanksgiving dinner at his house. He did the same the next year and every year that followed.

He gave the same kind of personal attention to those who worked for him — and those he wanted to work for him.

Fernanda Santos was Phoenix bureau chief for *The New York Times* when she ran into Callahan during a marathon Scripps Howard contest judging session.

"He asked, 'What do we need to do to convince you to join us?'," she said. "I'd had many years in journalism by then, but he was the first person to ever make me feel wanted for who I am and how I can contribute. For Chris, it was never about filling a vacancy. It was about finding the right person for the team. And that's one of the main reasons I chose to leave *The New York Times* for Cronkite. There's something special about a leader who sees, understands and values your strengths."

Joseph Russomanno remembers how Callahan helped him gain promotion to full professor. "I asked him early in the process for his support, and he was there every step of the way," Russomanno said. "His legacy, therefore, is leadership — including so much that he did that most of us will never know about — and putting his people in positions to succeed."

But what stands out most to those who know Callahan are his energy, ambition and drive. When he arrived, his goal for the Cronkite School was, as he put it at the time, "to be the best journalism program in the West. Period." That soon expanded to



Cronkite Dean Christopher Callahan and Walter Cronkite tour the construction of the Cronkite building in downtown Phoenix in 2008. Photo courtesy of Callahan



be the best journalism school in the country, and very possibly the world.

To get there, he drove everyone around him to think big, speak up and move fast, but he never drove anyone harder than himself. In fact, he seemed to be able to go for long periods of time without needing sleep at all.

It wasn't unusual "to get a pre-dawn e-mail from him recommending a relevant news story or pitching an idea," said Professor Stephen K. Doig. "He had the vision to see what the Cronkite School could become and the leadership skills to inspire our faculty, staff, students and university administration to bring that vision to fruition."

Callahan "thought a lot about 'tomorrow,' but not in a naval-gazing sort of way," added Mark Hass, professor of practice and former president and CEO of Edelman U.S. "Instead, he was about getting the future built. 'Let's do it' was more his motto, than 'let's study it.' I liked that a lot."

To illustrate how quickly Callahan could make things happen, Mark Trahan, editor of Indian Country Today, one of the nation's largest Indigenous news outlets, tells a story of how the non-profit ended up moving from Washington, D.C., to the Cronkite School several years ago. ICT had just finished up an election night broadcast and Trahan was meeting with Callahan and Bryan Brayboy, ASU vice president of social advancement.

"I told them about how everyone involved with the broadcast wanted to keep going (and wondered) what would it take to create

a daily news show," Trahan said. Callahan observed that a daily show would be expensive, but said, "Why not a weekly, and why don't you move to ASU, and we can make it happen?" Within months, it did.

Chris Kline, president and CEO of the Arizona Broadcasters Association, had a similar experience. As the seriousness of the pandemic was becoming clear in March 2020, Callahan offered to help organize a televised town hall for public officials to address the situation. Within days, the program was simulcast on stations throughout the state, drawing more than 1 million viewers.

"It was one of the biggest broadcasts that's ever come out of the Cronkite School, yet it also had limitations we couldn't have previously imagined ... with no more than 15 people in the entire building," Kline said. "In any other situation, we'd need quadruple that."

Callahan was especially committed to increasing the diversity of the school. During his tenure, the percentage of full-time faculty and the number of students of color almost doubled. He promoted the establishment of the nation's first campus chapter of the National Lesbian and Gay Journalism Association and one of the first campus chapters of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists.

His efforts were recognized with an Outstanding Achievement Award from

the ASU Commission on the Status of Women and a special commendation from the Hispanic Caucus of the Arizona Legislature. In 2012, the Cronkite School was the inaugural recipient of a university-wide Institutional Inclusion Award for college-level contributions to equity and inclusion.

Callahan said he feels "enormously fortunate to have been charged with preserving the legacy of one of the great journalists of the 20th century, Walter Cronkite, whose values have always guided our school, and to build on the strong foundation created by Douglas A. Anderson and many others who came before me.

"For 15 very special years, I had the honor to serve alongside some of the best, brightest and most creative minds in journalism and higher education, watching them teach, guide and inspire the next generation of young journalists and professional communicators. It was a privilege I will always treasure. The Cronkite School will always be with me." ■



Callahan welcomes The New York Times Executive Editor Dean Baquet (left) and Assistant Managing Editor Mark Lacey to a discussion with students. Photo by Marcus Chormicle



Callahan opens the Howard Center for Investigative Journalism at Cronkite. Photo by Marcus Chormicle

The **Jean and Christopher Callahan Fund for Student Success** supports students when, where and how they need it the most. To show appreciation for Cronkite's founding dean, the Cronkite community established the fund to align with Callahan's unwavering commitment to students and their success. Established shortly before the pandemic amplified the need, the fund assists students who are facing financial difficulties and provides training and other resources for wellness and emotional support. To give, visit [asufoundation.org/callahan](https://asufoundation.org/callahan)

## Gilger serves as interim dean during challenging year

Kristin Gilger, the senior associate dean who was at the center of the Cronkite School's growth for the past 15 years, was appointed interim dean of the school in June 2020.

Gilger, who is Reynolds Professor in Business Journalism and director of the National Center on Disability and Journalism, took over as the school's leader after former Dean Christopher Callahan accepted a position as president of the University of the Pacific in Stockton, California, and after the appointment of Sonya Duhé as Callahan's successor was rescinded by the university.

Gilger guided Cronkite through one of the most difficult years ever experienced in higher education. The coronavirus pandemic forced ASU to adjust to first virtual and then hybrid instruction for classes. At Cronkite, everything from the PBS nightly newscast to convocation ceremonies and the annual Cronkite Award for Excellence ceremony had to be produced in entirely new ways.

In addition, a widespread social justice movement led to a schoolwide effort to ensure that Cronkite is a place where all faculty, staff and students feel welcome. A full-time director of diversity programs was appointed, a new course in civility and diversity was introduced, and policies and procedures were reexamined.

During Gilger's tenure, the school's

enrollment expanded, despite the pandemic, and new faculty, staff and programs were added.

"I can't imagine anyone other than Kristin leading Cronkite during the most difficult of years. Her tenacity, incredible work ethic and inside knowledge of the school is what made her the only person who could have steered the ship in the choppiest of waters," said Vanessa Ruiz, director for diversity initiatives and community engagement. "What she has been able to do under incredibly challenging circumstances is nothing short of incredible."

Professor Stephen K. Doig had a good idea what Gilger was taking on; he had served as interim director of Cronkite for two years before Callahan became dean.

"I compare being an interim dean to a soldier who jumps on a grenade to protect others, while hoping it won't go off," Doig said. "The grenades Kristin kept from exploding were the pandemic and the concerns about social justice issues. Thanks so much to Kristin, we not only took on those challenges successfully, but even improved

Interim Dean Kristin Gilger speaks to a group of freshmen. Photo by Russell Prim



## Lodato named dean at Syracuse



Photo courtesy of Newhouse School

After nearly 15 years at the Cronkite School, Associate Dean Mark Lodato joined the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications at Syracuse University as its dean.

Lodato joined the Cronkite School in 2006 and quickly took the school's student-produced television newscast "Cronkite NewsWatch" from a once-a-week magazine show to a nationally recognized live program that reaches 1.4 million households week nights on Arizona PBS.

In 2014, Lodato received the ASU Faculty Achievement Award for Excellence in Curricular Innovation in recognition of his leadership in transforming the school's broadcast curriculum.

"He redefined how television news is

taught and set a new bar nationally," former Dean Christopher Callahan said when the award was announced.

In addition to supervising the school's broadcast and sports journalism degree programs, Lodato led advising, high school programs and recruitment and student success efforts. He also served as associate general manager for innovation and design at Arizona PBS.

Under his leadership, the school won more broadcast news awards than any other university in the country and developed partnerships with major media organizations.

Lodato came to Cronkite in 2006 after 16 years as a television reporter and anchor in Phoenix, Washington, D.C., San Francisco



the school that's now handed over to our new dean."

That dean, Battinto Batts Jr., assumed his new duties July 1, 2021.

"Kristin is a steady and reliable leader whose love for and commitment to Cronkite have helped move the school forward and make it the very best," Batts said. "She passed the leadership baton to me with Cronkite in a strong position to continue to grow while serving its mission to students and the global community. We should all feel a debt of gratitude to Kristin. I certainly do."

Gilger will continue to be part of the Cronkite faculty, teaching and pursuing writing projects.

"It has been an honor to lead the Cronkite School — and those are words I really mean," Gilger said. "This is a very special place, with the most resilient, talented and caring people I've ever worked with — all characteristics that have carried us through a challenging year and made it possible to emerge stronger than ever." ■

and Fort Myers, Florida. He also served as news director at the University of Maryland's Philip Merrill College of Journalism.

He is co-author of "News Now: Visual Storytelling in the Digital Age," a textbook used at more than 30 universities around the world.

As the dean of the Newhouse School, Lodato is responsible for a program that serves 2,300 students and employs more than 200, including 80 full-time faculty members across 18 academic units. ■

## Meet the deans

### Rebecca Blatt

As senior associate dean, Blatt directs the Cronkite School's master's programs and oversees some of the school's signature programs: Cronkite News, the Howard Center for Investigative Journalism, Carnegie-Knight News21 and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health Reporting Initiative. She also spearheads collaborations with partners across ASU and other institutions.



Blatt previously served as director of the Cronkite News Digital Production Bureau and director of the Cronkite Public Insight Network Bureau, which was awarded the prestigious ASU President's Award for Innovation and the Associated Press Media Editors College Innovator of the Year award under her leadership.

### Jessica Pucci

Pucci was promoted from associate dean to senior associate dean in charge of undergraduate recruitment and online degree programs. She also oversees Cronkite's Los Angeles expansion and strategic communications programs as well as two of the school's professional programs — the Digital Audiences Lab and the Public Relations Lab.



Pucci previously served as director of Digital Audience Programs and director of the Cronkite News social media team.

### Melanie Asp Alvarez

Alvarez serves as an assistant dean focusing on first-year student experiences, undergraduate orientation, events and student success. She also chairs the Cronkite Academic Standards Committee.

For more than a decade, Alvarez served as the assistant news director and executive producer of the award-winning Cronkite News newscast. She also produced the annual video tributes honoring Cronkite Award winners and the Cronkite School's virtual graduation ceremonies held during the pandemic.



Photo by Charlie Leight

## Gilpin named assistant dean for research

As Cronkite's newest assistant dean, Dawn Gilpin has a singular goal: elevate the school's research profile.

Gilpin was appointed assistant dean for research — the first to focus exclusively on research and the school's growing doctoral program — in spring 2021. Her job is to support faculty and student research, direct the school's doctoral program, mentor research faculty, and build research collaborations across the university.

Gilpin joined the Cronkite faculty in 2008 after receiving her Ph.D. in mass media and communications from Temple University. Previously, she had a 15-year career in organizational communication and public relations in Italy.

One of Gilpin's goals is to link Cronkite researchers with others at the university. "Ours is an inherently interdisciplinary field, and there are innumerable opportunities for working in teams with researchers from other disciplines on topics such as disinformation, migration studies, health disparities, climate change and sustainability, and more," she said.

In addition, she wants to build collaborations within the school by connecting research faculty and doctoral students with professional faculty and programs to aid both research and teaching.

Gilpin's own research focuses on identity construction and power dynamics within complex mediated systems. She teaches courses in mass communication theory, public relations, and social media and is a member of the Interdisciplinary Solutions for Social Impact lab faculty at the Graduate College. ■

## Diversity, equity and inclusion initiative seeks enduring change

**May 25, 2020, was one of those moments when everything seemed to change.**

George Floyd had been murdered by police, and the country would soon be engulfed in a long delayed and painful reckoning over its history of racial injustice.

Everywhere, people were talking about the need for change — real change — and Cronkite was no exception.

By mid-summer, the school's leadership had launched a sweeping initiative to examine all aspects of the school and take steps to ensure it is a welcoming and inclusive place for all. The effort, dubbed the Cronkite Experience, began with a series of listening sessions for students, alumni, faculty and staff to gain an understanding of their experiences and hear suggestions for improvements.

"These sessions provided insight that was, at times, difficult to hear but important for school leadership to understand in order to move forward with intention and clarity," said Vanessa Ruiz, director of diversity initiatives and community engagement.

By fall, seven working groups, made up of volunteers from across the school and Arizona PBS, were meeting to develop recommendations for next steps. Each group focused on a specific area of concern, such as curriculum and instruction, recruitment and retention, faculty cohesion and staff recognition.

Some recommendations were quickly implemented, said Kristin Gilger, Reynolds Professor in Business Journalism and interim dean during the 2020-2021 school year.

The school's lecture series was revised to focus on issues of diversity and inclusiveness. Teaching materials were updated for the required Cronkite Ethics and Diversity course. Cronkite News joined the BBC's 50-50 project to improve the diversity of sources in stories. Admission requirements were revised to minimize unintentional

**"We are constantly recalibrating, readjusting and adding new initiatives to fit the needs of our students, faculty, staff and alums."**

**— Vanessa Ruiz**

bias toward students who self identify as diverse. And Ruiz was appointed full-time director for diversity initiatives to lead these and a long list of other efforts.

"We are constantly recalibrating, readjusting and adding new initiatives to fit the needs of our students, faculty, staff and alums," Ruiz said. Success, she added, depends on the "we" in that sentence.

"I am just one piece of a big puzzle in which we all have important roles to play. You'll hear me say over and over: 'This has to be a team effort in order for it to be successful.' And we have tremendous people at Cronkite who have been and are dedicated to also pushing DEI initiatives forward."

Ruiz said she's especially excited about two new courses that grew out of the Cronkite Experience. One, a reporting course that prepares students to cover Indigenous issues and communities, was offered for the first time in spring 2021 and was taught by Indian Country Today Editor Mark Trahan and Cronkite Writer-in-Residence Terry Greene Sterling. The other, a Civility and Diversity course aimed primarily at entering and first-year students, is being offered for the first time in fall 2021.

"The idea is to start building awareness for our students from the get-go," Ruiz

said. "Then, as students move through the curriculum, we want to teach them how to approach reporting and communication projects from a multicultural perspective and to work respectfully with each other, regardless of their backgrounds or beliefs or career paths."

Other efforts focus on recruiting and retaining diverse faculty, staff and students — all of which will hopefully contribute to a much-needed and overdue diversification of the news media and communications industries, she said.

At Arizona PBS, new initiatives were launched to enhance coverage of diverse communities and interests. The station developed a partnership with Indian Country Today to present content and produced a 20-minute show, three mini-docs and various digital and social content for a comprehensive Martin Luther King Jr. Day project. And the entire staff participated in a year-long effort to create an Arizona PBS culture promise, a new ethics policy and an editorial policy.

General Manager Adrienne Fairwell said the ongoing diversity initiative, dubbed EPIC, continues to be a priority for the station. "One of the core reasons public media exists is because of its mission to be accessible, accepting and inclusive,"







Photos by Olivia Dow

she said. “At Arizona PBS we are always striving to meet the needs of those in our community who are underrepresented and underserved, (but the EPIC project) “has been a reminder of who we are and the need to do more and be better in a way that is purposeful.”

**At the same time, ASU is pursuing a 25-point plan to advance diversity and inclusion efforts.** In a statement, ASU President Michael M. Crow said the goal is to “accelerate meaningful change here at ASU and to contribute to a national agenda for social justice. We will work harder, invest more and do more to ensure that Black students, faculty and staff — and other underrepresented groups and individuals — are provided an educational, work and living environment that is welcoming, supportive and empowering to their success, creativity and ability to achieve their personal, educational and professional goals, all for the betterment of this university and our nation.”

The plan includes such efforts as hiring

more Black faculty, establishing a multicultural space on campus, creating a new Bachelor of Arts degree in Race, Culture and Democracy, publishing an annual report on key metrics related to student enrollment and graduation data and celebrating the successes, ideas and work of Black students, faculty and staff.

The diversity, equity and inclusion work being undertaken at ASU has only just begun, Gilger noted. “We recognize that none of this is easy, and we know that transformational change takes constant attention over a very long period of time. Our commitment is for the long-term.”

To achieve sustainable change, Ruiz added, requires not only changes in policies and procedures, but “intentional behavior every single day that creates a culture and environment where people feel valued, welcomed and respected.” ■

## Ruiz named school's first director of diversity initiatives

**As a reporter, Vanessa Ruiz was committed to telling stories that called attention to injustices and inequalities while preserving the dignity of those whose stories she was telling.**

It was a conviction she shared with students covering border and immigration issues in Cronkite News, and it's what guides her as the school's first director of diversity initiatives and community engagement.

Ruiz began working part-time on diversity initiatives in January of 2020 while also working in Cronkite News, but it soon became clear that a full-time director was needed.

“We found ourselves in the middle of a pandemic and major social and racial reckonings in our country, in our communities, in the journalism industry and in Cronkite,” Ruiz said.

As director, Ruiz, who also is a Southwest Borderlands Initiative Professor of Practice, has oversight of a wide range of diversity efforts within the school and works with others across the university on related initiatives. She serves as a member of the school's senior leadership team and works to develop programs, curricula and resources that promote equity and access across the school. She also is the lead instructor for the school's required Ethics and Diversity course.

**Her goal, she said, is to make a difference for faculty and staff — and especially students — not just during the time they are at Cronkite but well after they graduate.**

“I cherish the opportunity to connect, mentor, inspire and support all kinds of students,” she said. “They will carry this work far beyond Cronkite, and I want to make sure I do everything I can to make them feel empowered, confident and ready to take on the world.”

Before coming to Cronkite, Ruiz had a successful career as a broadcast



Photo by Olivia Dow

journalist — and she still counts herself as a working journalist. She regularly appears on national television as a fill-in anchor for PBS NewsHour West, which is produced at the school.

A native of Miami, Florida, of Colombian descent, Ruiz got her start while still in college as an assignment desk editor for the Telemundo Spanish-language television network in her hometown. She worked her way up to anchor and executive producer, becoming the youngest anchor on Telemundo International, where she brought news coverage to U.S. and Latin American viewers in English and Spanish.

She went on to report for WSVN-TV in Miami and KNBC in L.A., the nation's No. 2 television market. She also worked as news anchor and correspondent for the United States Agency for Global Media, producing stories and special programs for Cuban and Latin American audiences. In 2015, she joined KPNX-TV, the NBC affiliate, in Phoenix as the main evening news anchor.

Career highlights include anchoring and covering everything from Barack Obama's 2013 presidential inauguration to the catastrophic earthquake in Haiti in 2010, the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, and the 2016 Rio Summer Olympic Games.

Ruiz is the recipient of numerous awards, including several Emmys and, most recently, the Phoenix Business Journal's "40 Under 40" award.

Ruiz said her new role at Cronkite may be the most challenging — and most important — she has ever undertaken.

"This work touches upon every single thing we do at Cronkite, from curriculum to student experiences, events and programming, faculty and staff recruitment and retention, training ... you name it," she said. "What I hope is that I can help create structures and policies that will remain in place long after I'm gone, assuring that all our students, faculty and staff feel proud to be a part of the Cronkite community." ■



## Students pursue social justice reporting in the midst of national upheaval

The year 2020 was filled with political friction, a deadly pandemic and racial divisions, all of which Cronkite students addressed through stories, photos and investigations of protests and civil unrest, health disparities in underserved communities, and the 2020 presidential election and its aftermath.

Students covered these issues while reporting for professional programs such as the Howard Center for Investigative Journalism, the Southwest Health Reporting Initiative, the Carnegie-Knight News21 program, and Cronkite News. In the process, they learned a great deal about covering social justice

issues that are at the heart of a national conversation about equity and inclusion.

**José-Ignacio Castañeda Perez**, who reported for News21 and the Howard Center, said he developed an appreciation for journalism "as a kind of service for the public and your sources. You're trying to

elevate their voices to a level where change can be enacted."

Castañeda was one of eight students who worked on the Howard Center's "Homeland Secrets" investigation, which centered on Homeland Security Investigations, a little-known federal law enforcement unit that serves as the investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security and operates with virtually no oversight.

The project, which was prompted by an HSI shooting in a residential Phoenix neighborhood, won the top collegiate award in the large student category from Investigative Reporters & Editors.

After graduating in fall 2020, Castañeda took a position at Delaware Online, the news website of The News Journal newspaper, the main newspaper for Wilmington, Delaware, and surrounding communities. There, he continues to focus on social justice issues as a reporter for underserved communities.



Castañeda





**HOMELAND SECRETS**

Federal law enforcement shootings have escaped the kind of scrutiny that gave rise to the local policing reforms of the Black Lives Matter movement.

Experts say that's no accident. Federal agencies are not transparent, making public oversight difficult.

One such agency is ICE's Homeland Security Investigations, whose agents have been involved in shootings nationwide. Most of the victims have been black, Hispanic or Native American, according to the Howard Center for Investigative Journalism.

*Published on Feb. 24, 2020*

Arizona National Map Documentary Findings Methods

**CHAPTER 1**  
**War Zone**

Agents were pursuing a suspected human smuggler when he took an unexpected turn into a community of neat stucco homes and walking trails. What followed sounded like "a war zone."

[Read more](#)

**CHAPTER 2**  
**The Chase**

They thought the suspect's SUV had only two occupants, although agents later acknowledged being unable to see through its dark tinted windows. Inside the SUV, tensions were rising.

[Read more](#)

**CHAPTER 3**  
**The Shootout**

Warren Jose sat in the police interrogation room, in hospital gown and handcuffs, sinking forward with each ragged breath as he struggled to explain what happened in Alhambra.

[Read more](#)

**CHAPTER 4**  
**The Fallout**

The mother of the slain woman struggles to understand why agents aren't being held responsible for her death, as defense lawyers seek copies of HSI policies and procedures.

[Read more](#)

**KIDS IMPRISONED**

**VIDEOS**

**More than police: How the school-to-prison pipeline really works**

The school-to-prison pipeline has been talked about for decades. Harsher punishments in the name of school safety push kids out of schools and into detention centers and prisons. And, police are only part of the problem. (Video produced by Brady Ford, Chase Jones and Gabriela Szymanski)

**Target on my back: How youth experience racial disparities in the justice system**

Dylan Sutter and Edgar Barro recount their experiences with law enforcement and court processes as youth of color. Though from different parts of the country, both encountered similar struggles as a result of their race. (Video produced by Victoria Traxler)

**Growing up gang-affiliated**

Ruben Seldarria and Lucero Herrera were involved in gangs from young ages. Once children join a gang, experts say, a range of consequences puts them at a heightened risk to enter the juvenile justice system, including an increase in criminal offending and a higher probability of arrest. (Video produced by Bryon Mason II and Braxton Kwan)

**The business of private facilities**

About a quarter of kids who are incarcerated end up in private centers. The companies that own the facilities market them as cheaper, safer and more effective alternatives, but lawsuits and allegations raise questions. (Video produced by Joe Fox and Franco LaRosa)



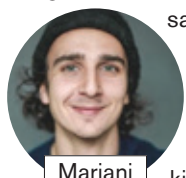
Far left: Student photographer Alberto Mariani covers a Black Lives Matter demonstration in Brooklyn, N.Y.

Students produced journalism on a wide array of social justice issues.

To view Howard Center projects:  
[cronkite.asu.edu/howard-center](https://cronkite.asu.edu/howard-center)

To view Carnegie-Knight News21 projects:  
[cronkite.asu.edu/news21](https://cronkite.asu.edu/news21)

"I think the position that I'm in right now was created because of the social awakening that the whole country went through and realizing that we have to do a better job of covering underserved communities (and) marginalized communities," Castañeda said.



Mariani

Photographer **Alberto Mariani** had never covered a demonstration or civil unrest of any kind before the summer of 2020 when he reported on protests in Phoenix, Los Angeles, Portland and New York in the wake of the murder of

George Floyd, a Black man, at the hands of a white police officer in Minneapolis. In addition, he made his way to Washington, D.C. on Jan. 6 when angry mobs stormed the U.S. Capitol.

"There were probably 5,000 or 10,000 people," he said of the Jan. 6 insurrection. "I don't know the numbers, but it was definitely a lot of angry people with their belief that the country was being stolen from them."

"You wouldn't think that American democracy would be so fragile. This was not what I thought about America. I saw reporters from the AP and Reuters getting

their equipment destroyed as they were setting up."

Mariani, a native of Italy, said he wants to continue capturing such moments after he graduates in 2022. The reason, he said, "is not because of the adrenaline rush, but because it cannot be staged. ... It's our job to capture history as photographers."

Other students told stories of racial and social injustices in health care — injustices heightened by the COVID-19 pandemic. Their stories explored the pandemic's effect on Indigenous tribes, unequal access to health care, and how vaccine hesitancy in communities of color have been caused by



Allen-Charmley

a lack of trust stemming from a history of racial injustice in public health.

**McKenzie Allen-Charmley**, part of the school's Southwest Health Reporting Initiative program, produced stories for Cronkite News about the pandemic's effects on the White Mountain Apache Tribe and the Navajo Nation. Allen-Charmley is Dena'ina Athabaskan from the Native Village of Eklutna in Alaska.

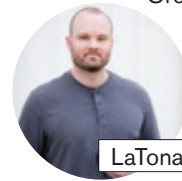
"I was interested in becoming an Indigenous reporter, being Indigenous myself," she said. "I wanted to represent that underserved community. A lot of the time, even in my own experience, in my own tribe, we don't like it when the media comes because they portray us in a very selective light that's not accurate and kind of outdated."

Students in the program, supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, regularly report on health disparities in text, broadcast, audio and digital video formats, said Pauline Arrillaga, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Professor of Practice in Health News. Their work is published by clients across Arizona and the U.S. and in Canada, Mexico and Guatemala.

"Coverage of health disparities in underserved communities and communities of color has never been more vital — just as it's never been more vital to ensure that the journalists and media/communications

specialists of the future have a better understanding of these communities and the issues they face," Arrillaga said.

Recent graduate **Franco LaTona**, who is now a communications specialist at the University of Texas-Austin, was part of the 2020 News21 cohort of students from



LaTona

Cronkite and other journalism programs that produced an in-depth multimedia project, "Kids Imprisoned," on the U.S. system of juvenile justice. The students investigated private companies that run programs in detention facilities, conditions in detention facilities, policing practices, employee misconduct, and the impact of the juvenile justice system on families, communities and victims.

"There are terrible racial disparities in terms of representation in juvenile detention centers, from private camps to reform schools," LaTona said. "It's a lot of Black and brown kids, and many of them are not getting the kind of treatment and rehabilitation that's going to lead to a healthy, successful and productive life in adulthood."

LaTona said he hopes the project sparks public discussion about ways to make the system more equitable. ■

The **John S. and James L. Knight Foundation** supports the **Carnegie-Knight News21** program with the goal of changing the way journalism is taught in the U.S. and training a new generation of journalists capable of reshaping the news industry. The Knight Foundation advances journalism in the digital age, focusing on projects that promote informed and engaged communities and lead to transformational change. For more information, visit [knightfoundation.org](https://knightfoundation.org).

The **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation** established the **Southwest Health Reporting Initiative at Cronkite** to increase coverage of in-depth health care news about underserved communities across the Southwest. For more than 45 years, the foundation has worked to improve health and health care in an effort to achieve the goal that everyone in America has a fair and just opportunity for health and well-being. For more information, visit [www.rwjf.org](https://www.rwjf.org).



The **Scripps Howard Foundation** makes possible the work of the **Howard Center for Investigative Journalism** to advance deeply researched watchdog journalism. The foundation supports philanthropic causes important to The E.W. Scripps Company and the communities it serves, with a special emphasis on excellence in journalism. For more information, visit [scripps.com/foundation](https://scripps.com/foundation).



A Cronkite News story (top left) reveals how the Navajo Nation struggled with water shortages early in the pandemic. Cronkite students Mackenzie Shuman and Molly Duerig (above) and Joel Farias Godinez (below left) report from the field for a Howard Center for Investigative Journalism project on a unit of Homeland Security Investigations. Photos by Lauren Mucciolo (above) and Maud Beelman (below left).





Students Jenna Delatorre (left) and Reed Harmon anchor a February 2021 Cronkite News newscast. Photo by Alina Nelson, Cronkite News



## Cronkite News works to diversify sources in stories

By Lisa Diethelm

Cronkite News, the daily news outlet of Cronkite and Arizona PBS, has partnered with BBC's "50:50 The Equality Project" to diversify sourcing of news stories.

Cronkite was one of the first journalism schools to join the 50:50 project, which has been adopted by more than 100 partner organizations in 26 countries, including the BBC, ABC News-Australia, the Financial Times and Voice of America.

The project began four years ago in the BBC's London newsroom as a way to improve the number of female sources in BBC stories. The goal is to have equal representation of men and women, a goal the BBC reports has been met by more than 70% of its volunteer reporting teams.

The program has recently been expanded to include representation of ethnicity and disability.

Like other participants, Cronkite News students and faculty monitor the diversity of their sources, share and discuss the data they collect and then identify possible improvements.

Christina Leonard, executive editor of Cronkite News, said data collected over a period of seven months showed that women represented about 41% of all sources in Cronkite News broadcast stories.

Participating in the 50-50 project has helped students become more aware of how they source their stories, which will result in more voices being heard, she said.

"It's all about inclusion versus exclusion," Leonard said, "and that trickles down to everything that we do both in the newsroom and in the products that we produce."

Leonard added that Cronkite News also wants to

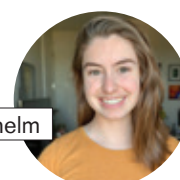


Broadcast reporter Melissa Zaremba does a run-through of the weather for Cronkite News. Photo by Alina Nelson, Cronkite News

increase the diversity of sources beyond gender to include race, age and geography — all as part of a goal to broaden and deepen coverage in underserved communities.

"It's always important for us as a journalism school and as a learning institution to train our students not just how to do news, but to know what to look for moving ahead," she said. "We want to develop better journalists for the future." ■

The BBC featured a video of Cronkite students talking about their work on the project. It can be viewed on YouTube at [youtu.be/svnTg-1JiXY](https://youtu.be/svnTg-1JiXY).



Diethelm

## Cronkite News and Gaylord News team up to improve coverage of Native communities

**Covering Indigenous communities has long been a priority for both the Cronkite School and the University of Oklahoma's Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication.**

Now, the two programs are combining forces to amplify that coverage.

Stories about Native issues are being published on the websites of both Cronkite News and its counterpart, Gaylord News, and distributed to more than 100 news organizations around the country through their respective news services. In addition, students from Oklahoma who work out of the Cronkite News bureau in Washington, D.C., will team up with Cronkite students to cover national news about Indigenous issues.

**"This collaboration between the Gaylord News program and our friends at Cronkite will provide badly needed coverage of Native American communities in Oklahoma and Arizona, as well as nationally," said Ed Kelley, dean of the Gaylord College.** "The networks both programs have established through media partners across the country will distribute Gaylord and Cronkite students' stories, to the benefit of news consumers. This alliance not only gives young journalists more opportunities to hone their skills but also a greater understanding of Native issues."

During the first few months of the new program, the two schools shared almost two dozen stories. One of the first was a Gaylord News story about a prom dress, calling attention to missing and murdered Indigenous women, now part of an exhibit at the Smithsonian National Museum of American History. Other stories that have been shared include the legacy of Indian boarding schools and the Cherokee Trail of Tears.

"This is just the beginning," said Kristin Gilger, Reynolds Professor in Business Journalism and former interim dean of the Cronkite School. "By combining forces and amplifying each other's work, we can fill a gap in coverage that has persisted for way too long. We're excited to see where this



A story about a prom dress, calling attention to missing and murdered Indigenous women, was shared by Cronkite News and Gaylord News. Photo by Emma Sears, Gaylord News

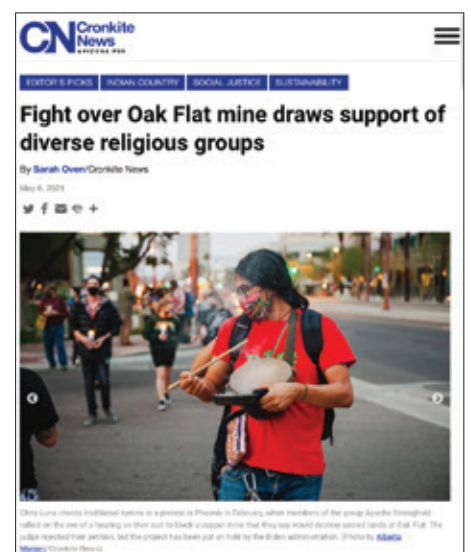
collaboration takes us."

The Cronkite School and Gaylord College both have prioritized coverage of Native American communities and issues through reporting programs and classroom teaching. The Cronkite School is home to Indian Country Today and covers Indigenous communities extensively through its Cronkite News service, the news arm of Arizona PBS.

Cronkite also offered a reporting course focused exclusively on coverage of Indigenous communities and issues for the first time in spring 2021.

Gaylord College, the home of the Native American Journalists Association, recently produced a 41-part series entitled "Exiled to Indian Country" that was distributed by its Gaylord News service. The college also launched the Bob Burke Native American Reporting Center that will train reporters to work in Indigenous communities.

The two journalism programs have worked together on a number of other initiatives supported by the Inasmuch Foundation, formerly the Ethics & Excellence in Journalism Foundation, established by Oklahoma journalist Edith Kinney Gaylord in 1982. The foundation provides fellowships for Cronkite and Gaylord students to participate in the national Carnegie-Knight News21 program headquartered at Cronkite and supports professorships at both schools. ■





## New ASU California Center to showcase Cronkite programs

**With a newsroom, edit bays, broadcast studio and control room, the Cronkite School plays a big part in ASU's new California Center in downtown Los Angeles.**

The California Center opened for fall 2021 in the newly renovated Herald Examiner building with an ambitious slate of programs intended to give ASU students opportunities in L.A. and serve a burgeoning population of Angelenos.

Among the first to move in was the Cronkite News bureau, which has been located in leased space in Santa Monica since 2014. Advanced undergraduate and graduate students spend a semester in the bureau covering news and sports in Southern California, working under the direction of Professor of Practice Shaya Tayefe Mohajer, a seasoned reporter and editor.

The newsroom has prime space on the third floor of the building where Herald Examiner reporters and editors once worked. Students produce packages for the Cronkite News newscast, aired in prime time on Arizona PBS on weeknights, and contribute content for the Cronkite News website, which is shared with news organizations around the country.

Those students have access to a state-of-the-art broadcast studio, control room and edit bays as well as a virtual production studio where they can use LED display and motion capture technology to deliver immersive experiences for audiences.

Also sharing the third floor will be Zócalo Public Square, part of ASU's Knowledge Enterprise, which syndicates articles to media outlets around the world and hosts events to encourage public discussion of ideas and issues.

The building, commonly referred to as LA HEX, also will house programs from ASU's colleges of law, public service, nursing, business and fine arts as well as the Thunderbird School of Global Management.

"The LA space is going to provide us a lot of tremendous opportunities to offer all sorts of digital programming, research and collaborations that will really expand upon what we're already doing here in Phoenix," said Cronkite Dean Battinto Batts Jr.

Among the new Cronkite programs will be a master's degree in emerging media and narrative storytelling in partnership with the Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts and an on-the-ground version of the school's popular online master's in digital audience strategy. Also planned is an integrated communications agency in which students will design and execute strategies for clients seeking to connect with digital audiences.

The new Cronkite-Herberger master's program, "Emerging Technology and Narrative," will offer students the chance to connect traditional storytelling with cutting-edge visual media, such as virtual, mixed and augmented reality, animation and gaming. Students will learn not only new storytelling techniques but project management, funding options and client development.

Senior Associate Dean Jessica Pucci said the new degree program is unlike any other. The L.A. area, she said, "has always been a hotbed for creativity and



Photos by David Diaz, ASU

innovation in media. But what we're offering is this unique opportunity to learn and engage with the community at the same time, while building a really rich portfolio full of media work that I don't think you could get at any other university."

Nonny de la Peña, a pioneer in virtual and augmented reality, will lead the new program. She said she was motivated to take on the challenge of building a new center "because I want to shift the demographics of who's creating and using these new technologies. This new form of storytelling can offer a visceral and positive impact on our perception of the world, and we want the center to be a place that takes advantage of that potential while supporting anyone who wants to harness these creation tools to tell their own stories."

In addition to degree programs, the HEX building will be a home for executive education programs, workshops, seminars and other events. Cronkite, for example, plans to host some of its "Must See Mondays" lectures in L.A., and live stream them for audiences across the country. The school also plans to host gatherings for alumni and journalism professionals from the area.

"We really want the center to be a place where local media and communications professionals come — whether it's to file a story or hold a meeting or workshop," said Kristin Gilger, Reynolds Professor in Business Journalism and former interim dean. "And we want our students to have plenty of opportunities to be part of this vibrant media community."

ASU also plans to collaborate with the city of Los Angeles, local institutions and area businesses to address educational and societal issues and engage with the 53,000 ASU alumni who live in California.

ASU President Michael M. Crow has said that California is an important part of ASU's future for several reasons, including the significant economic, social and cultural linkages between Arizona and California and the presence of LA as a media and arts capital and one of two global American cities.

He also has pointed out the need for more educational opportunities in the state, where the growth of college-eligible students is rapidly outpacing enrollments.

The university plans a grand opening for the building in January 2022. ■

## Painstaking renovation transforms historic Herald Examiner Building

When newspaper tycoon William Randolph Hearst set out to build a home for his Los Angeles newspaper, he was determined it would be "the handsomest in the United States."

**Expense was no object. Hearst paid \$1 million in 1913 for a parcel of land on the south side of downtown in what is now the Broadway Theater District and went about building a five-story structure that would be the largest in the U.S. devoted solely to the publication of a newspaper.**

Hearst commissioned California's first female licensed architect, Julia Morgan, to design his newspaper's headquarters. She opted for a mix of Spanish Colonial Revival and Mission Revival styles, with arched windows and doorways, sawtooth skylights and a distinctive red tile roof with blue and yellow domes.

The building featured a grand two-story lobby of carved wood panels, hand-painted Italian tiles, hammered iron grills and lots of marble with gold detailing. Two 16th-century Spanish columns from a dismantled palace were imported to complete the cathedral-like space.

For the next 75 years, the Los Angeles Examiner, which subsequently became the Los Angeles Herald-Examiner, operated out of the building. But after years of financial decline, the last edition of the paper was printed on Nov. 2, 1989, and the building was shuttered. Except for occasional use as a television or movie set, it remained that way for the next three decades.

Until now.

ASU announced plans to restore the historic building in 2018, and the painstaking work began in 2020 under the supervision of New York-based Georgetown Company, which purchased a controlling interest in the property in 2015.



The renovation preserves the grandeur of the original lobby. Photo by David Diaz, ASU

The goal of the restoration was to modernize the space while preserving the character of the building, Georgetown Company Vice President Michael Fischer said when the renovation began.

The exterior of the building was refurbished to its original state, new roofing and fire sprinklers were installed, dropped ceilings and walls were removed, and original skylights were brought back to life.

Tall, arched windows facing Broadway had been boarded up ever since workers hurled bricks through the windows during a labor dispute that began in 1967 and lasted for 10 years. Those windows were restored, as was an interior stairwell that Hearst used to get from the third floor, where the newsroom was located, to his apartment on the fifth floor. The handrail, made out of solid bronze, still bears the dents from angry strikers who beat on it with bats.

Much of the work was delicate and painstaking, especially when it came to the ornate lobby. A conservator helped oversee the work, from cleaning tiles to fixing light fixtures and repairing a grand two-faced clock.

The historic lobby "is definitely unique and special," said Rick Naimark, associate vice president for program development planning, who started working on this project in fall 2018. "But my favorite part of the building is the third floor, which is a beautiful, light-filled mixing bowl that will be a hive of activity including entrepreneurship programs, Cronkite News, film and immersive media programs, and many others, all sharing a





Photo courtesy of  
Nonny de la Peña

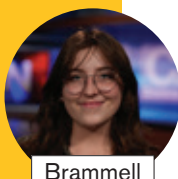
common space.”

The renovated building has an open, modern feel, thanks to interior improvements designed by the Los Angeles office of Gensler at the direction of ASU as the primary tenant. Visitors enter through a new, separate lobby, with access to a two-story event space. The third and fourth floors house classrooms, conference rooms, small “huddle spaces,” large open work areas and studios for broadcast and film production. On the fifth floor, Hearst’s former apartment area was converted into offices. There’s also retail space on the ground floor that will be leased for restaurants or shops.

University Realty, an affiliate of ASU Enterprise Partners, also is a major investor in the building, along with the Hearst Corporation. ASU is the main lessee, occupying about 80 percent of the 100,000 square feet of space.

Naimark noted that journalist and author Jane Jacobs, who wrote extensively about urban renewal, once said that “new ideas need old buildings.” “I really think this rings true in this case,” he said. “I’m excited we were able to take this building, which was built for an entirely different purpose, and bring it back to life after 25 years of dormancy, but with a completely different mission: to bring innovative ASU programs to students and the general public as ASU’s California Center.” ■

*Student Kasey Brammell contributed to this report.*



Brammell

## ‘Godmother of virtual reality’ shares appointment at Cronkite

**Nonny de la Peña, dubbed the “Godmother of Virtual Reality” by Forbes and The Guardian, is leading a new graduate program in emerging media and narrative storytelling based in Los Angeles.**

A New American Fellow, Yale Poynter Media Fellow and former correspondent for Newsweek, de la Peña is a leader in immersive journalism, a field that she is widely credited with establishing.

She was named Innovator of the Year by The Wall Street Journal and one of CNET en Español’s most influential Latinos. Her TEDWomen talk, which describes the use of cutting-edge technologies for creating intense and empathic engagement on the part of viewers, has garnered upward of 1.3 million views, and her piece “Hunger in Los Angeles,” on which she collaborated, became the first VR piece ever shown at Sundance and inspired Wired Magazine to

nominate her a “#MakeTechHuman Agent of Change.”

De la Peña’s appointment is in both the Herberger Institute and the Cronkite School, and the L.A.-based program and center will be a collaborative effort between the two.

“Nonny de la Peña’s fusion of gaming technologies with journalism is the most significant advancement in news since television in the 1950s. She’s a game-changer,” said Dianah Wynter, inaugural director of Herberger’s Sidney Poitier New American Film School.

De la Peña is the founder and CEO of Emblematic Group, a digital media company focused on immersive virtual, mixed and augmented reality. She earned a B.A. in sociology and visual and environmental studies from Harvard University, an M.A. in online communities from the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism at the University of Southern California, and a Ph.D. in media arts and practice from the USC School of Cinematic Arts. ■



Photos by Tomás Karmelo Amaya

## Arizona PBS gets new general manager

Adrienne Fairwell wasn't sure she would ever leave her native South Carolina. She grew up in the small town of North Augusta, attended the University of South Carolina, and spent two decades working in Carolina state government and public television.

But then Julia Wallace, Arizona PBS interim general manager, called. And called again.

Arizona PBS was looking for a permanent general manager, Wallace told her, and it was a great opportunity to grow a station that already was one of the nation's best.

Fairwell decided to take the plunge, and a few months later, in March 2020, she was named general manager of the station, one of the country's largest public television outlets, reaching 80% of Arizona homes and 1.9 million households each week.

She is the first African American to lead the station in its 60-year history.

As general manager, Fairwell oversees a staff of about 60 that manages four broadcast channels, an audio production team and a growing array of digital platforms.

Fairwell said she knew of Arizona PBS' reputation as a top public television station with strong community support. But

what really swayed her, she said, was the "incredibly talented team and the opportunity to lead, execute and elevate its mission and the mission of public media and the role it plays within local communities."

Fairwell got her first taste of public television after landing a college internship with South Carolina Educational Television and Public Radio. After earning her bachelor's degree in journalism and mass communication, Fairwell was hired full-time at the station as a production assistant. She was later promoted to production coordinator and then public information specialist.

That job led to public information roles at Midlands Technical College, the South Carolina Department of Revenue, and the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce. In 2015, she became director of marketing and communications at the South Carolina Department of Commerce. Along the way, she earned a master's degree in human resources development and a concentration in organizational communications.

But Fairwell had never lost her love for

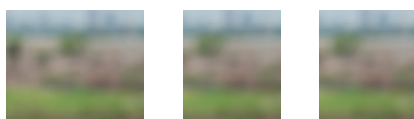
public television, and when South Carolina Educational Television and Public Radio offered to make her vice president of marketing, communications and development, she decided to return. Within a year, she had acquired an additional title: Assistant General Manager.

In that job, Fairwell was responsible for brand management, audience engagement, revenue activities, partnership development, multiplatform content generation, studio and field production, local and national programming, and government transparency work.

She also focused on developing content for television, digital and radio audiences. She incorporated both long-form and short-form stories to better connect with viewers and listeners, and she is credited with identifying new audiences with different needs and attention spans while retaining loyal viewers.

She also helped establish a new partnership between SCETV and Furman University's Riley Institute to begin a series of diversity, equity and inclusion classes to help train public media employees. In addition, she led an effort to streamline the





## Interim general manager moves Arizona PBS forward

Julia Wallace hadn't planned on running a public television station; and she certainly hadn't planned on running one during a pandemic.

But from June of 2020 to April of 2021, that's exactly what she did.

As interim general manager of Arizona PBS, Wallace, Cronkite's Frank Russell Chair in the Business of Journalism, bridged the leadership gap while the school conducted a search for a permanent general manager.

Despite the pandemic, which meant most staff members worked from home for much of the year, the station stayed on the air — and Wallace made progress on a number of fronts.

On-air schedules were rearranged to account for viewer interests; viewership, donations and membership grew; and ratings improved.

A digital team was created to reach new audiences with PBS content on platforms such as Instagram and YouTube. A new set was installed in Studio B on the sixth floor of the Cronkite building, giving shows like "Horizon" a fresh, modern look and access to better technology. And a new partnership was forged with Indian Country Today under which Arizona PBS is a presenting station for the Indigenous news outlet.

Wallace, who was the top editor at The Atlanta Journal-Constitution and managing editor of three other major newspapers

before coming to Cronkite, also pushed for more news coverage.

The station added "Break it Down," 10-minute segments that feature thought leaders discussing current social, political and economic issues. Segments have focused on everything from the experience of being a Black professional to the role of sports in society.

And in the months leading up to the fall 2020 election, Arizona PBS staged 12 debates for candidates for national, state and local offices, including the only debate between candidates for a highly contested race to fill the seat of the late U.S. Sen. John McCain.

Wallace also made diversity a priority during her time at the station, launching a comprehensive review of policies and practices to ensure an equitable and inclusive workplace and offering expanded programming on diversity issues.

"It was an honor to spend nine months as interim general manager of Arizona PBS," she said. "It is truly a state treasure with a talented and dedicated staff and 50,000 loyal members around the state."

How loyal? Wallace likes to tell the story of one man who wanted to make an estate gift to the station. He was dying of brain cancer, and "He said the biggest thing on his mind was a concern for our democracy," she said. "He felt like Arizona PBS plays a key role in sustaining that democracy. I couldn't agree more." ■

station's recruitment process to be more inclusive of women, people of color, people with disabilities and veterans.

Julia Wallace, the Frank Russell Chair in the Business of Journalism who served as interim GM while a search was conducted, said that in her first few months on the job, Fairwell already has shown an ability to bring people together and forge a promising strategic vision for the station.

"This is a critical time for public media, and Adrienne is a seasoned leader who understands the important role public media play in the health of a community," Wallace said. "We are really fortunate to have her leading the station."

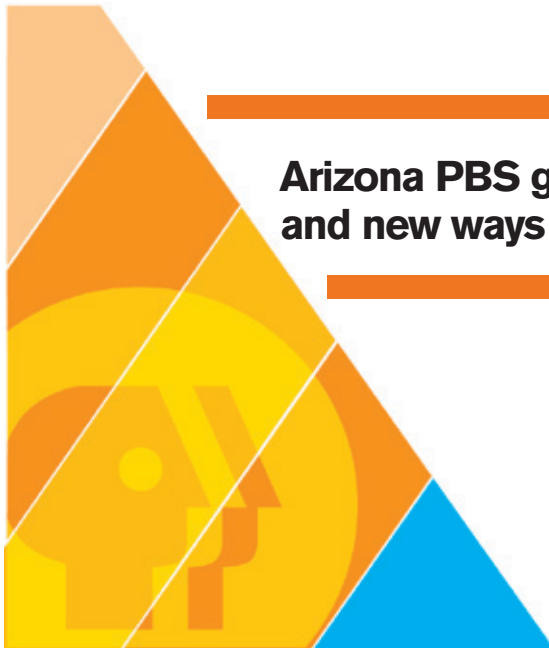
Fairwell, who worked as a certified fitness instructor on the side for many years, said the move to Phoenix with her husband and two children and taking over a new job haven't left her much time for exercise. But she wears an Apple Watch and tries to get in at least 12,000 steps a day.

She did find time to recently complete the Public Media Diversity Leaders Initiative of the Riley Institute at Furman University. She was part of the inaugural class of 31 public media professionals from across the country selected for the three-month program to learn ways to apply diversity, equity and inclusion principles to behaviors, systems and cultures within

their organizations.

"This experience has been an invaluable opportunity to really dive into these crucial topics with my peers across the public media system," Fairwell said.

**"As a public service, the mission of Arizona PBS is to support the communities that rely on us, so the more inclusive we are able to be, the better."** ■



## Arizona PBS goes digital with new offerings and new ways to watch

### ARIZONA PBS Passport

On the night of Oct. 6, 2020, nearly 180,000 people turned on their televisions to watch a debate between candidates vying to represent Arizona in the U.S. Senate. It was one of the most viewed programs of any PBS offering on any PBS station over the past two years.

But that was just a small slice of the number of people who took in the debate between Republican Martha McSally and Democrat Mark Kelly

Almost three times as many people turned to the Arizona PBS YouTube channel, where the debate was live streamed, and more than 60,000 people weighed in on Twitter as staff members live-tweeted during the event, offering up memorable quotes and graphics displaying the moderators' questions. **This is just one example of how Arizona PBS, which is celebrating its 60th anniversary this year, is finding ways to reach audiences where they are — on their computers and on their phones.**

As audiences have moved from traditional television viewing to digital platforms, television stations are moving with them, said Adrienne Fairwell, general manager of Arizona PBS. "That doesn't mean we aren't committed to broadcasting quality programming," she said. "We'll always be a television station, but, increasingly, we're a television station with content in many formats on many platforms."

To spur those efforts, the station expanded

its digital team and appointed a digital director to focus on new ways of engaging audiences, whether that's via social media or the station's website at [azpbs.org](http://azpbs.org).

One of the first projects new Digital Director Ebonye Delaney took on was how to pivot a traditional television show on the Arizona food scene into something meaningful during the height of the pandemic when people could no longer dine in at restaurants.

She and her team decided to create a spin-off of the show "Plate & Pour," specifically for Instagram. "Plate & Pour: Takeout" utilized IGTV, Instagram's standalone video application for Android and iOS smartphones, which allows for longer videos than is typical in Instagram feeds. The videos, which were just longer than a minute in length, highlighted local restaurant take-out options.

And because audiences no longer want to wait for an appointed time to watch a favorite program or catch up on the news, Delaney and her team are putting more emphasis on the station's streaming platform, Arizona PBS Passport.

"Streaming is how people watch shows they love, and Passport is our vehicle to be a part of that experience," she said. "We have to create and acquire content that is bingeable and accessible via non-traditional watching means."

Other projects are focused on making the station's website more accessible and more interactive. A package on Black History Month in early 2021, for example, included an interactive timeline and multiple

stories. The team also is planning a six-part digital-only series showcasing an upcoming installation by visual artist, composer and musician Paul Rucker at the ASU Art Museum.

Delaney said her team also plans to launch a food podcast centered on an expected rebirth of Arizona's food industry following the COVID-19 pandemic. And the station's website and Arizona PBS KIDS Facebook page are undergoing a redesign to be more engaging and interactive — and offer customizable tools and resources for educators, students and parents.

As Arizona PBS expands its offerings, Fairwell has plans to strategically meld over-the-air broadcast, digital and audio platforms to create an authentically, customizable viewing experience for all audiences.

"We have created a bold mission, vision and strategic plan that will serve as our roadmap for the next three years," she said.

**"We are intentionally focused on how to best serve multiple audiences in the digital space with the creation of new, interactive and engaging content." In other words, "The best is yet to come."**





Photo by Paula Maturana, Arizona PBS

## Delaney leads Arizona PBS digital transformation

**Ebonye Delaney has made her mark on Arizona PBS during her four years at the station — rising from show director to assistant production manager to the director of the station's brand-new digital team.**

Her first position at Arizona PBS was as show director, working on such programs as “Arizona Horizon,” “Horizonte,” “Arizona Spelling Bee” and “Check, Please! Arizona.” She also taught an introduction to studio production course with Jim Jacoby, director of studio production.

“Every year since, I’ve been blessed to step into new roles and duties,” Delaney said. “I’ve always seen my career as something fluid, where I could go in any direction, and my newest role proves that.”

As director of digital content and production, Delaney oversees the station's digital content strategy, an increasingly important role as people shift to consuming news and entertainment online. She leads



Ebonye Delaney's family visits her at Arizona PBS. Pictured are Ebonye Delaney (left), her mother, Dawn Delaney (right), and her grandmother, Gloria Delaney. Photo by Kiersten Moss

a team of eight people who manage the Arizona PBS website ([azpbs.org](http://azpbs.org)) and all its social media platforms.

Delaney said her goal is to find more ways to share more stories with more readers and viewers. “Stories are how we connect, experience, remember and learn,” she said. “And I want to help tell as many stories as I can.”

In addition to her digital role, Delaney has been active in diversity, equity and inclusion efforts at Arizona PBS and Cronkite.

“I wanted to be the change I wanted to see, so I raised my hand,” she said. The work reflects ASU’s charter, which measures success by whom we include and not exclude, Delaney said. “I’m proud to serve

and be an agent of change and get into some good trouble.”

Delaney said she has been most influenced by her grandmother, Gloria Delaney, a woman she describes as funny, intelligent and fierce. Her day isn’t complete, she said, until she’s talked to her grandmother on the phone.

Her grandparents were born and raised in South Dallas at a time when Blacks were struggling for equality.

“They would tell me stories of businesses with white-only signs and how African Americans had to ride on the back of the bus. My grandfather, an educated Black man, was fearful whenever he walked down the same street as a white woman. He spoke about how he would have to bow his

## Station wins eight Emmys in 2020 awards program

By Lisa Diethelm

**When the Emmy awards were announced in the fall of 2020, Arizona PBS staff members could hardly believe it. They had won eight Emmys in six categories — the station's best showing in more than 40 years.**

The station tied with ABC15, which also won eight Emmys at the 43rd annual Rocky Mountain Emmy Awards, hosted by the Rocky Mountain Southwest Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

"Plate & Pour," an original program that explores the Southwest's diverse food scene, garnered three Emmys in its second season, including one for the show's host, local chef Mark Tarbell for talent and narration.

"Catalyst," a show highlighting ASU research, took home an Emmy, as did the program "Art in the 48" about Arizona artists. The station's Central Sound audio production team won two Emmys for recordings of "Only in Sleep" by Ēriks Ešenvalds and "Harp of Nerves" by Hilary Purrington.

Another Emmy went to the station for "Bred for This," one of a series of short programs, or interstitials, celebrating stories and experiences within the African American community created for Black

History Month. The piece was written and performed by nationally recognized performance artist Caress Russell.

Ebonye Delaney, former assistant production manager who is now digital director for the station, produced the interstitial. She said "Bred for This" was a "labor of love" and a powerful means of conveying African American struggles.

The Rocky Mountain Southwest Chapter is one of 19 chapters of NATAS and represents Arizona, New Mexico, Utah and El Centro, California. NATAS honors advancements, creativity and achievements in the arts and sciences of the television industry.

Arizona PBS has won 98 Emmys since 1981. ■



Diethelm

head and cross to the other side of the road to avoid any trouble.

"While we may have grown up poor, they taught us that we didn't have to stay there," she continued. "Hard work, determination, and education were our golden tickets to a better future. Growing up with that living history, I was determined to be a worthy representative of our family, our name and their legacy."

Delaney holds a bachelor's degree in radio, television and film from the University of North Texas and worked as director, manager and producer at CBS 19 and ABC 7 in Texas, KOAA 5 in Colorado, and ABC15 in Arizona before coming to the

Cronkite School.

Film remains her private passion. She's active in the local film community and works on local independent films whenever she gets a chance.

But at home, it's PBS that she tunes into. "I especially love 'Spy in the Wild,' where they put the cameras in robot animals and get these beautiful shots," she said. "And I think we have some of the best news coverage around, so when I watch news, I watch 'PBS NewsHour.'" ■



8

2020 Rocky Mountain Emmys

### Informational/Instructional "The Gatherers" (Plate & Pour)

Melissa Thompson, executive producer  
Rebecca Guldberg, producer  
Margery Punnett, series producer  
Alicia Longo, producer  
Mark Tarbell, host

### Magazine Program — Feature/ Segment

#### "Cruising by Barrio Cafe" (Plate & Pour)

Rebecca Guldberg, producer

### Magazine Program — Program/ Special or Series

#### "Lighting the Way" (Art in the 48)

Melissa Thompson, executive producer  
Shana Fischer, executive producer  
Alberto Rios, host  
Jay Conner, segment producer

### Special Event Coverage

#### "NASA's Orion Parachute Test" (Catalyst)

Grace Clark, producer  
Steve Filmer, producer  
Vanessa Ruiz, producer  
Jim Tuttle, producer  
Craig Johnson, producer  
Jordan Elder, producer

### Interstitial

#### "Bred for This" (A celebration of Black History Month)

Ebonye Delaney, producer  
Nakia Christian, producer  
Curt Pair, director of photography

### Audio — Live or Post Production

#### "Only in Sleep" by Ēriks Ešenvalds

Alex Kosiorek, senior audio engineer

#### "Harp of Nerves" by Hilary Purrington

Alex Kosiorek, senior audio engineer  
Melanie Montgomery, assistant audio engineer

### Talent — Performer/Narrator

#### Mark Tarbell, host of "Plate & Pour"



**“It was one of the most watched programs ever in Arizona PBS history.”**

**— Allysa Adams**



## Arizona PBS serves public with series of high-profile debates

By Kasey Brammell and Mallory Schnell



The debate between incumbent U.S. Sen. Martha McSally (R-Ariz.) and her Democratic opponent Mark Kelly drew the third highest ratings of any PBS show on any PBS station in the country over the past two years.



Brammell



Schnell

In the months leading up to the 2020 election, when the presidential election was dominating the news, Arizona PBS called voters' attention to other races on the ballot through a series of debates between candidates for federal, state and county offices.

The station partnered with The Arizona Republic, KJZZ public radio, Arizona Public Media and the Citizens Clean Elections Commission to offer a total of 12 debates between candidates vying for seats in the U.S. Senate, U.S. House of Representatives, the Arizona Corporation Commission and Maricopa County Sheriff.

Ted Simons, host of “Arizona Horizon,” moderated the debates along with other journalists, including Steve Goldstein of KJZZ, Lorraine Rivera of Arizona Public Media, and Maria Polletta, Richard Ruelas and Yvonne Wingett Sanchez of the Republic.

The stakes were high for one race, in particular — between Martha McSally and Mark Kelly for one of Arizona's two U.S. Senate seats. McSally, a Republican, was appointed to the position long held by the late Sen. John McCain, and the election was to decide who would finish out McCain's last term. Kelly, a Democrat and former Navy pilot, won the seat.

In the only face-to-face debate between the two candidates, neither held back on issues ranging from former President Donald Trump's response to the pandemic and partisan politics to U.S. Supreme Court appointments, immigration, health care and more.

The debate drew a viewership of nearly 180,000 — one of the highest ratings of any PBS show on any PBS station in the country over the past two years. Arizona PBS also streamed the debate on YouTube and Facebook, reaching another 250,000 viewers. Adding in partner media outlets, nearly 1 million people took in the debate. It also was nominated for a regional Emmy by the Rocky Mountain Southwest Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

“It was one of the most watched programs ever in Arizona PBS history,” said Arizona PBS Executive Producer Allysa Adams. “People are always interested in our debates, but there was clearly a heightened sense of interest in politics and what was happening in Washington during this election season.”

Simons got high marks for his respectful but persistent questioning. As he pushed McSally to answer a question about whether she supported Trump, well-known broadcaster Soledad O'Brien tweeted: “Another moderator, though, showing how it should

## Chamber's IMPACT Award a 'great 60th birthday present'

Adrienne Fairwell had barely arrived in Phoenix when she found herself behind a podium accepting an award on behalf of Arizona PBS from the Greater Phoenix Chamber of Commerce.

For the first time, the station was selected as a winner of a Greater Phoenix Chamber IMPACT Award, capturing the top prize in the Arizona Advocate/Small-Medium Business category.

"It was a great way to start the job," Fairwell said, "and a great 60th birthday present for the station."

The IMPACT Awards honor the accomplishments of Valley businesses and the positive influence they have on the community and the economy. Eight businesses out of more than 100 applicants were selected for the 2020 awards.

The chamber called Arizona PBS a trusted community resource, providing quality programming and news to 80% of Arizona homes.

In her remarks, Fairwell called attention to the station's contributions in education, its support for businesses and nonprofits, and



Heather Kivatinos, director of sales and media operations for Arizona PBS, and General Manager Adrienne Fairwell display the Greater Phoenix Chamber IMPACT Award. Photo courtesy of Greater Phoenix Chamber

its service as a trusted source of news and information.

Education, she said, was "especially important in 2020 as the pandemic took hold and schools shut down. We had to quickly adjust our programming to provide at-home learning content, filling a desperate

need for both parents and teachers. That became our No. 1 priority."

She said the station also paid attention to what was happening to businesses during the pandemic. A spin-off of the award-winning show "Plate & Pour" was created for Instagram to encourage viewers to support struggling restaurants. The staff of "Arizona Horizon" and PBS NewsHour West stepped in with COVID-related programming, including a town hall with the governor to discuss the state's response to the pandemic.

And during a highly divisive political season, the station introduced a new segment, "Break It Down" to "Horizon" and the Cronkite News newscast. The segment, which features a discussion on a current topic, is, Fairwell said, "an example that civil dialogue can and does tackle some of the toughest issues of our time."

Finally, in October of 2020, the station hosted the state's only debate for the highly contested U.S. Senate race between candidates Martha McSally and Mark Kelly.

■

be done. Who is this gentlemen? He's good."

Behind the scenes, Arizona PBS staff worked to ensure all 12 debates went off smoothly and safely. In addition to the usual logistical challenges, the staff had to figure out how to host a gathering without spreading the coronavirus. Attendance was limited to press and moderators, all of whom had to socially distance, wear masks and submit a negative COVID test two days before the debates.

In addition to the debates, in the months leading up to the election, "Arizona Horizon" featured a series of guests for vigorous discussions of consequential ballot propositions, including funding for public education and legalization of marijuana for personal use.

The debates and the roundtable discussions are "great examples of the kind of public service that Arizona PBS provides," said Julia Wallace, interim manager of the



"Arizona Horizon" host Ted Simons was praised for his questioning of senatorial candidates. Photo by Paula Maturana, Arizona PBS

station at the time.

Adams said she was especially proud of the effort to provide balanced information to the public. "You're hearing from both sides;

it's not filtered. It's not edited; it's live as is," she said. "I think that's why this kind of programming is so necessary." ■





Host Stephanie Sy delivers West Coast updates from the set of PBS NewsHour West. Photo courtesy of PBS NewsHour West



Phil Maravilla is the new senior producer for PBS NewsHour West. Photo courtesy of Phil Maravilla

## PBS NewsHour West hustles to cover western states during pandemic

By Griffin Fabits and Kasey Brammell

The PBS NewsHour West team hadn't been settled into its new space in the Cronkite School for a full six months when COVID-19 hit, shutting down studios, control rooms and most field reporting in March 2020.

Suddenly, staff members had to figure out a way to do television from home.

Senior producer Richard Coolidge said the transition wasn't always easy, but "we were able to make it work."

The NewsHour West team, which is responsible for covering the western U.S. and updating the nightly PBS NewsHour national broadcast for airings in the West and online, switched from live reports on West Coast news to pre-recorded packages and other content.

Host Stephanie Sy said she pivoted to focus "solely on my role as a correspondent. I have always relished both roles," she said, "but being a field reporter and not being able to be in the field is frustrating."

She and other members of the NewsHour West crew staggered their return to the Cronkite building and, in April 2021, correspondents, producers and camera people were able to travel and conduct in-person interviews once again. Sy is back to hosting NewsHour West updates.

Coolidge, who returned this summer

to the NewsHour in Washington, D.C., to serve as senior managing producer, has been replaced by Phil Maravilla, who has experience as a producer at both the local and network levels.

Coolidge said he values the time he spent at NewsHour West and the relationship with the Cronkite School.

"The use of the studio, the control room and the production crew, including students, is what gets us on the air every night," he said. "We also have two NewsHour West interns each semester who help build the rundown, move and transcode video files, cut voiceovers and sound bites and time the show. They are an integral part of producing the news update every night."

Having a bureau in Phoenix allows NewsHour to get to stories in the West more quickly, Coolidge said. "Another reason (to locate here) was we could cover stories that haven't typically gotten a lot of coverage out West, including immigration, energy, land use issues, Native American issues ... which are undercovered because they're typically more rural and harder to get to."

There's also plenty of breaking news to cover. NewsHour West has produced stories on wildfires throughout the West, drug decriminalization in Oregon, the 2020

election in California, COVID-19 in Arizona, California and Alaska, and an audit of Arizona presidential election results.

**"I am reminded almost every night how important it is to have the NewsHour West update. The news cycle has only gotten busier. There's not a single person on our team that is not giving it their all right now. Each of us realize how important our roles as journalists are right now."**

**— Stephanie Sy**



Fabits



Brammell



## Howard Center student journalists learn investigative reporting by doing it

What do stay-at-home orders mean when you have no home?

What's behind a spate of shootings involving the little known ICE Homeland Security Investigations unit?

How aggressively does the federal government investigate and prosecute child sexual abuse cases in Indian Country?

These are just some of the questions students in the Howard Center for Investigative Journalism have attempted to answer since the center was launched in 2019.

Each semester, top students, most of them working toward master's degrees in investigative journalism, learn watchdog journalism by doing it. Under the direction of Maud Beelman, former head of U.S. investigations for The Associated Press and the founding director of the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, and Lauren Mucciolo, an investigative documentary producer, students produce projects on topics of national significance, and their work is published by major news organizations across the country.

The Howard Center at Cronkite and another at the University of Maryland were established under grants from the Scripps Howard Foundation to advance deeply researched watchdog journalism and train the next generation of investigative reporters. The centers honor the legacy of Roy W. Howard, former chairman of the Scripps-Howard newspaper chain and a pioneering news reporter.

Cronkite's most recent investigation, released in summer 2021, focused on the federal government's handling of child sex



Howard Center students report on the impact of COVID on the most vulnerable people. Photo by Natalie Walters for "Caring for COVID's invisible victims"

abuse cases in Indian Country.

The FBI and U.S. attorneys offices are responsible for taking the lead in investigating and prosecuting major crimes, such as child sexual abuse, in Indian Country. But a Howard Center analysis of Justice Department data found that child sex abuse investigations accounted for about a third of all investigations administratively closed by the FBI. The analysis also revealed that U.S. attorneys pursued charges less than half the time in child sexual abuse cases from Indian Country — about one-third less often than they filed charges in other crimes.

Other Howard Center investigations have targeted the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on homeless people; tracked how federal money was spent to help the homeless during the pandemic; reported shootings by Homeland Security Investigations' agents; and revealed how federal undercover agents from that unit torpedoed a major sex-trafficking investigation by engaging in sex acts with suspected trafficking victims.

All of the projects require students to learn the tools of investigative reporting, including the acquisition and analysis of data and documents, Beelman said. "Students learn how to verify, and then



Photo by Chloe Jones for "Caring for COVID's invisible victims"

verify again," she said. "And by shining a light on problems, by holding the powerful accountable, they have a very real impact on people's lives."

The Howard Center beat out thousands of entries to win the top collegiate prize presented annually by the Society of Professional Journalists for its 2020 investigation "Operation Agent Touch." The center's "Homeland Secrets" investigation also was awarded the top prize in collegiate journalism by Investigative Reporters & Editors. ■

The center's projects can be found at [cronkite.asu.edu/howard-center](https://cronkite.asu.edu/howard-center).



## Other awards for Howard Center projects include:

**“Homeland Secrets”** won first for university student investigations in Editor & Publisher Magazine’s prestigious national EPPY Awards contest, was a regional finalist for online in-depth reporting in the Society of Professional Journalists’ Mark of Excellence Awards, and won second place in the Arizona Press Club awards.

**José-Ignacio Castañeda Perez, Alexandra Edelmann, Joel Farias Godinez, Derek Hall, Nicole Ludden, Maia Ordoñez, Devan Sauer and Mackenzie Shuman**

**“Operation Agent Touch,”** a project that was a continuation of the “Homeland Secrets” investigation, examined HSI’s handling of sex-trafficking investigations in Arizona and beyond. In addition to the national SPJ contest top prize, it was a finalist in the EPPY awards for best news story. The audio story “Sex acts and audio-tapes: How the case unraveled” won a first in the Broadcast Education Association’s educational category.

**Molly Duerig, Alejandra Gamez, Rachel Gold, Mythili Gubbi, Grace Oldham, James Paidoussis, Meagan Sainz-Pasley, Mackenzie Shuman and Beno Thomas**

**“COVID’s invisible victims,”** an investigation of COVID-19’s impact on the homeless, received a first-place EPPY award for best news story as well as second in the BEA and Arizona Press Club contests.

**Nino Abdaladze, Molly Bohannon, Austin Fast, Jamie Fields, Sanjana Garg, Megan Lupo and Katie Surma**

**“Caring for COVID’s invisible victims,”** on the use of federal CARES Act funding intended for the homeless, won first in the Association of Health Care Journalists Student Reporting category and was a SPJ regional finalist.

**Madeline Ackley, Agya K. Aning, Andy Blye, Molly Bohannon, Austin Fast, Audrey Jensen, Chloe Jones, Anne Mickey, Shaena Montanari, Jill Ryan, Lidia Terrazas, Natalie Walters, Helena Wegner and Helen Wieffering**

## Howard Center graduates move into investigative newsrooms

Eleven graduates in investigative journalism from the Cronkite School and the Philip Merrill College of Journalism at the University of Maryland are now working in nonprofit newsrooms, thanks to a new fellowship program funded by the Scripps Howard Foundation.

The fellows are graduates of the Howard Centers for Investigative Journalism, which opened in 2019 with a \$6 million commitment from the foundation. They were selected by the news organizations through a competitive process and will spend a year working side-by-side with reporters and editors in those newsrooms.

The fellowship program is named in honor of legendary journalist and news executive Roy W. Howard.

“Roy W. Howard was an extraordinary journalist and news executive of The E.W. Scripps Company who made an indelible mark, not just on the profession he influenced but on the course of world affairs,” said Liz Carter, chief executive officer and president of the Scripps Howard Foundation. “He believed passionately in the important role journalists fulfill in a free society, so it’s fitting that the Howard Centers, and now the Roy Howard Fellowships, bear his name and further the cause to which he dedicated a lifetime.”

Carter said the fellowship program is designed to provide post-graduate journalists with a “hands-on, real-world

environment to develop their communication, collaboration, networking and leadership skills.”

The fellowships cover moving and training expenses as well as 60% of each fellow’s salary, with the remainder of salary and benefits paid by host newsrooms.

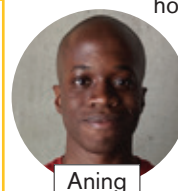
“This couldn’t have come at a better time,” said Kristin Gilger, Reynolds Professor in Business Journalism and former interim Cronkite dean. “The fellowship program will immediately put talented, eager and well-trained reporters in newsrooms precisely at a time when investigative reporting is needed more than ever.”

The first two classes of fellows began their yearlong assignments in 2021 at nonprofit news organizations with strong commitments to investigative journalism. They have joined the newsrooms of National Public Radio, PBS NewHour, The Associated Press, International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, InsideClimate News, Searchlight New Mexico, KUOW public radio in Seattle, Mother Jones, the Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism, and Reveal at The Center for Investigative Reporting.

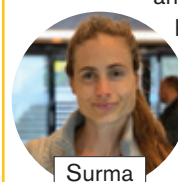
Within a few months, two fellows assigned to cover environmental justice for InsideClimate News were already having a big impact, said Executive Editor Vernon Loeb. “It’s clear to us that the data skills — and the investigative mindset — they’ve

honed during their studies (at ASU’s Howard Center) perfectly position them to get at this critical but long undercovered story. We’ve also seen, very quickly, what effect fresh eyes and a jolt of enthusiasm have had on their colleagues.

**Agya [Aning]** and **Katie [Surma]** are clearly force multipliers.” ■



Aning



Surma

The **Scripps Howard Foundation** supports philanthropic causes important to **The E.W. Scripps Company** and the communities it serves, with a special emphasis on journalism education, excellence in journalism and childhood literacy. At the crossroads of the classroom and the newsroom, the foundation is a leader in supporting journalism education, scholarships, internships, minority recruitment and development and First Amendment causes.

## Students report on border and immigration issues in Arizona and abroad

**Each year, a group of Cronkite students spend their spring break in another country, experiencing what it's like to practice journalism abroad and producing deeply reported multimedia projects on immigration and other pressing issues around the world.**

In 2021, students faced unprecedented travel restrictions due to COVID-19 that kept them closer to home. While students missed making a big trip, the timing was fortuitous, said Cronkite Professor of Practice Jason Manning.

**"A major, ongoing immigration story was unfolding within our own state,"** he said. "Record numbers of border crossers, particularly asylum seekers, were apprehended at the border in 2021. And as that happened, a new presidential administration sought to change federal immigration enforcement methods and manage the shutdown of the previous administration's border wall project."

Students and faculty members made multiple trips to the border over the course of the semester to cover stories about how influxes of asylum seekers were affecting small border towns and how border wall construction will have environmental impact for years to come. The students also reported on the dangers of crossing the border through the Sonoran desert, how volunteer groups work to save migrants' lives and the impact of COVID-19 on small border communities and migrants seeking shelter there.

The work was published at [cronkitenews.azpbs.org](https://cronkitenews.azpbs.org) and shared with news outlets throughout the state.

Students in the borderlands program take a fall semester seminar with Cronkite Professor of Practice Rick Rodriguez that prepares them for reporting on Latino cultures and countries. They then move into a spring reporting course taught by Rodriguez and Manning during which they report and produce an in-depth project.

In recent years, those projects have included a report on how the U.S. territory of Puerto Rico was recovering from the



Above: Rijk Morawe, chief of natural and cultural resources management at Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, talks to tourists Alda Angst and Ian Keay about the border barrier's impact on wildlife. Photo by Isaac Stone Simonelli, Cronkite Borderlands



Concrete boxes contain the remains of unidentified border crossers. Photo by Raphael Romero Ruiz, Cronkite Borderlands

2017 hurricane that devastated the island; a refugee crisis that was inflaming long-standing ethnic strife in Hungary; and how a Sandinista-backed inter-oceanic canal project was expected to affect the lives of people living in Nicaragua.

The 2020 borderlands project took 16 students to Panama just before pandemic-driven travel restrictions shut down most international trips.

Rodriguez said he chose Panama because the country has been inundated with migrants from around the world seeking to reach the U.S. or Canada. Their journey is especially perilous, including crossing the Darien Gap — one of the most dangerous jungles in the world — that encompasses Panama's southern border with Colombia.

The student reporters spoke with Panama's border patrol and humanitarian groups just outside the Darien as well as dozens of immigrants from Haiti, Cuba, India, Pakistan and multiple countries in Africa who made the perilous two-week journey.

They also interviewed American expats who have moved to Panama to take advantage of a steadily growing economy and government officials struggling to deal with a huge backlog

of applications for legal residency.

The project was published as a print magazine and at Cronkite News at [cronkitenews.azpbs.org/panama-migrants-toughest-test](https://cronkitenews.azpbs.org/panama-migrants-toughest-test).

Borderlands projects have won numerous awards, including the prestigious Robert F. Kennedy Award for college students reporting on social justice issues, the Hearst Journalism Awards, Society of Professional Journalists Awards, Broadcast Education Association Awards, and Rocky Mountain Emmys Student Awards. ■

Support for **Cronkite Borderlands** student reporting projects comes from the **Howard G. Buffett Foundation**, a private family foundation working to improve the standard of living and quality of life for the world's most impoverished and marginalized populations. The foundation focuses on funding for food security, water security, conflict mitigation and post-conflict development. The foundation also provides a **Visiting Professional in Visual Journalism** at the Cronkite School.





## News21 “Unmasking America” project reveals uneven toll of COVID-19

**Carnegie-Knight News21 students were back in the field during summer 2021 to report and produce a national project evaluating the uneven effects of COVID-19 across the country.**

The project, “Unmasking America,” focuses on vulnerable populations, including those living in rural areas, the poor, Native American tribes and people with disabilities, as well as the impact of the pandemic on restaurants, public schools, day care facilities and rural health care.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the lives of every American, but none more dramatically than those living in poverty,” said Jacqueline Petchel, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and News21 executive editor. “This project examines the national toll COVID-19 has taken on those already struggling to make ends meet and examines disparities affecting the most vulnerable.”

Top journalism students from 17 universities across the country worked on the project under the direction of Petchel and a half-dozen other Cronkite faculty and staff.

The students took part virtually in a spring semester seminar to research the topic, identify stories, develop sources and do preliminary reporting. They then completed a paid 10-week summer fellowship at the Cronkite School during which they traveled the country to report stories. Among the states they visited were Texas, Florida, California, New Mexico, Arkansas, Virginia and Wisconsin.

In 10 deeply reported stories, a four-part podcast and dozens of videos and photos,

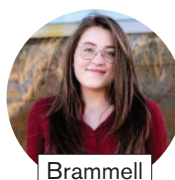
the students tell the stories of how the pandemic pushed families to the precipice of homelessness and food insecurity, left some public schools struggling for survival and put enormous strain on rural health care providers.

The project is being distributed nationally to news organizations for their use and is published at [unmaskingamerica.news21.com](https://unmaskingamerica.news21.com). Past projects have been published in part by The Washington Post, The New York Times, NBCNews.com, USA Today, the Center for Public Integrity, The Philadelphia Inquirer and The Arizona Republic, among many other news organizations.

Over the past decade, News21 projects have included “Kids Imprisoned” about the American juvenile criminal justice system, “State of Emergency” about uneven federal aid for natural disasters, and “Hate in America” about the prevalence of hate crimes across the nation. All three have been awarded the prestigious Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Award for national social justice reporting by college students.

“State of Emergency” also won the top student award from the Online Journalism Association and the IRE student investigative award, and “Hate in America” earned an Edward R. Murrow Award. ■

*Student Kasey Brammell contributed to this report.*



Brammell

### **“Unmasking America” Carnegie-Knight News21 students**

Amudalat Ajasa  
Priya Bhat  
Ian S. Brundige, Myrta J. Pulliam Fellow  
Ceara Burden  
Gina Butkovich  
Jimmy Cloutier, Inasmuch Foundation Fellow  
Thomas Curdt, Myrta J. Pulliam Fellow  
Ashley Depew  
Emily DiSalvo  
Zhixuan Fan  
Kylie Graham, Buffett Foundation Fellow  
Meghan Hall  
Chase Hunter, Buffett Foundation Fellow  
Lauren Irwin  
Maddy Kline  
Maya Leachman, Inasmuch Foundation Fellow  
Brenda Maytorena Lara, Buffett Foundation Fellow  
Elliott McVeigh, Inasmuch Foundation Fellow  
Sara Metz  
Domenica Orellana  
Michael Patton, Buffett Foundation Fellow  
Amanda Paule  
Jessica Ruiz  
Natalie Saenz, Buffett Foundation Fellow  
Emily Schmidt, NewsS21 Fellow  
Maxwell Shavers  
Jessica Simms  
Nancy Marie Spears  
Prince James Story, News21 Fellow  
Robert Tann  
Zachary Van Arsdale, Buffett Foundation Fellow  
Emma VandenEinde, Don Bolles/Arizona Republic Fellow  
Beth Wallis  
Wendy Weitzel  
Mackenzie Wilkes

The **John S. and James L. Knight Foundation** provides core support for the News21 program. Fellows are supported by their universities as well as a variety of foundations, news organizations and individual donors, including **The Arizona Republic/azcentral.com**, **Inasmuch Foundation**, **Howard G. Buffett Foundation**, and **Myrta J. Pulliam**.



## Programs give students professional experience, edge on jobs



Cronkite student Isabella Fredrickson delivers a weather report for Cronkite News, Photo by Jenny Dupuis, ASU

By Lisa Diethelm

**Nothing separates the Cronkite School from other journalism schools more than its 13 professional immersion programs that place students with experienced professionals in working newsrooms and labs.**

In these programs, integral to the school's "teaching hospital" approach to education, students get experience equivalent to their first or even second jobs, said Reynolds Professor of Business Journalism and former Interim Dean Kristin Gilger. And they're one of the key reasons employers look to Cronkite for new hires.

All students are required to complete at least one professional program, and many return for a second or third experience.



Diethelm

### **Cronkite News – Phoenix**

In the largest professional program at Cronkite, students report and produce stories from the Arizona Statehouse to the U.S.-Mexico border. Their work is featured in the Cronkite News nightly newscast on Arizona PBS and on the Cronkite News website. Student packages also are picked up by professional news outlets across the state and the country.

### **Cronkite News – Washington**

For this program, Cronkite students pack their bags and spend a semester in the nation's capital. From the ASU Center in Washington, D.C., they cover Arizona's congressional delegation, Supreme Court decisions and other stories important to Arizona audiences.

### **Cronkite News – Los Angeles**

The news bureau — recently moved from Santa Monica to downtown L.A. — gives students the opportunity to cover news and sports stories in the nation's second largest city. Their work is published by Cronkite News and distributed to a wide variety of media outlets in and around Southern California.

### **Cronkite News – Phoenix Sports**

In this bureau, students majoring in sports journalism get experience reporting on professional sports teams, such as the Phoenix Suns, as well as collegiate and youth sports. Students spend part of their spring semester covering Major League Baseball for news organizations with teams based in Arizona for spring training.

### **Cronkite News – Borderlands**

Students focus on covering immigration and border issues as well as Indigenous communities across the state. Their work, in digital and broadcast formats, is featured on Cronkite News and in other outlets, such as Indian Country Today.

### **Cronkite Noticias**

Bilingual students create digital content for the Cronkite Noticias website at [cronkitenoticias.azpbs.org](http://cronkitenoticias.azpbs.org), which serves Spanish-speaking audiences in Arizona. They also produce Spanish-language content for television that airs on Univision Arizona.

### **Carnegie-Knight News21**

Each year, Cronkite students work with other top journalism students from across the country to produce an in-depth multimedia reporting project on a major national issue, such as voting rights and hate crimes. Publication partners include The Washington Post, NBC News, USA Today and other national news outlets.

### **Digital Audiences Lab**

Students define, grow and engage digital audiences for real clients in an agency-like setting. They develop proficiency in digital strategy, social media, SEO/SEM, analytics and client relations through written, video and graphic campaigns.





Students Susan Wong (above) and Jordan Spurgeon (right) report from the NBA Finals. Photos by Jordan Spurgeon and Susan Wong, Cronkite News



### Howard Center for Investigative Journalism

In this groundbreaking program, students spend a semester developing their investigative reporting skills by executing deeply reported projects with regional or national implications. The work is published by media outlets across the country.

### New Media Innovation and Entrepreneurship Lab

In this lab, teams of students create new products and tell stories in new ways by learning to use virtual reality, augmented reality, gaming and other technologies. Some students develop projects into new business ventures.

### Public Relations Lab

Students develop campaigns and strategies for real clients that range from Fortune 500 companies and government entities to nonprofits and start-ups. The lab functions like an integrated marketing PR agency, with students working in teams on client projects.

### RWJF Health Reporting Initiative

Students report on Latino, Native American and Spanish-speaking border communities in Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, Southern California and Texas. Their work is distributed through Cronkite News and to print, digital, radio and TV news outlets around the state and region.

### TV Production and Graphics Lab

Students help put the Cronkite News newscast and other PBS programs on air, learning all facets of control room production and what it takes to turn reporter content into a vibrant production. Students also learn field production shooting, lighting and audio skills. ■

## Enrollment nearly triples for students in sports journalism

By Kasey Brammell

Sports enrollment at Cronkite has nearly tripled since the school began offering bachelor's and master's degrees in sports journalism in 2015.

That year, the school welcomed 189 undergraduates and 14 graduate students. In 2021, the school had 528 undergraduates and 46 graduate students — growth of 179% and 228.5%, respectively.

The program's success is due to a mix of the school's location in the heart of a major sports market, a faculty made up of dynamic sports professionals, and a curriculum that emphasizes hands-on learning, said Brett Kurland, director of strategic initiatives and sports programs.

Cronkite students get to cover a bevy of professional teams, MLB spring training and major sporting events, including the Super Bowl and the NBA Finals. In addition, students manage and produce digital, video and social content directly for some of the biggest entities in sport, including the NFL, NCAA and the U.S. Olympics.

And they learn from faculty that includes Arizona Sports Hall of Fame member Paola Boivin, sportscaster Gary Thorne and ESPN Undeclared writer William C. Rhoden.

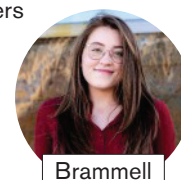
"I am jealous of our students and the opportunities they have," Kurland said. "If I wasn't leading the program and I was 18, I'd be the first to sign up."

The sports program was forced to pivot during the pandemic when games were cancelled and students were restricted from doing field reporting, but it didn't stop students from producing sports journalism. They wrote about how athletes, teams and franchises were coping with COVID-19, created a series looking back at big moments in Arizona sports history and reported on the growth of virtual sports.

"We teach our students to go beyond the games, to look past the box scores," Kurland said. "We want our students to find the stories that inform and educate and that resonate with both fans and the public at large."

As the sports program continues to grow, Kurland said he looks forward to developing even more partnerships with professional sports organizations and to finding new ways to tell innovative sports stories.

"The one constant in our business is change, and we teach our students to embrace it," he said. "Cronkite prepares students beyond their first job; we prepare them to be leaders across the sports media landscape, shaping its future." ■



Brammell

## New digital media literacy degree only one of its kind in the country

By Lisa Diethelm

### The Cronkite School is offering a new online degree program — a Bachelor of Arts in digital media literacy.

The immersive program, offered entirely online, is the only undergraduate digital literacy degree offered in the country. It is focused on how to combat the spread of misinformation and disinformation through critical thinking, global awareness and ethical decision making in the context of digital media.

Students learn and work alongside Cronkite faculty with expertise in media literacy. They include Kristy Roschke, Ph.D., managing director of the school's News Co/Lab, and Dan Gillmor, co-founder of the lab, to master skills applicable to corporate communications, public policy, education, nonprofit communications, social media and community engagement. The degree also prepares students for master's and doctorate research programs and professional programs in journalism, law and education.

Cronkite Senior Associate Dean Jessica Pucci said students who complete the digital media literacy degree will understand how digital media works and will be able to explore its impact on daily life.

"Media literacy is top of mind for the Cronkite School because a healthy society depends on it. Misinformation is one of democracy's greatest threats, and while



The new Digital Media Literacy degree is offered entirely online.

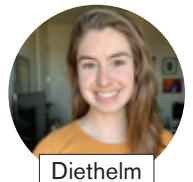
the Cronkite School is already known for nurturing journalists and storytellers, we also have a responsibility to educate our audiences, who only thrive with truthful, reliable information," Pucci said. "Our digital media literacy students will be well prepared to help their audiences navigate a digital world overloaded with information and separate the wheat from the chaff."

The program is the latest addition to Cronkite's online degree offerings that include a liberal-arts-style bachelor's in Mass Communications and Media Studies and a digital marketing-focused bachelor's in Digital Audiences.

The school welcomed the first cohort

of students for the fall 2021 semester. Graduates will have the opportunity to use cutting-edge tools and tactics in courses such as "Misinformation in Society," "Media and Society," and "Freedom of Expression in the 21st Century."

**In a world dominated by information and advancing technology, the bachelor's degree will open opportunities for positive change through studies on health care, government, education, conflict and sustainability, Pucci said.** ■



Diethelm

## Cronkite News focuses on solutions journalism

By Lisa Diethelm

The Cronkite School has taught solutions journalism for years, but it wasn't until recently that the extent of the effort was clear.

The Solutions Journalism Network, which champions reporting that focuses on responses to problems rather than solely on the problems themselves, implemented a tracking system in spring 2021. The tracker pulled stories from more than 1,000 news outlets in 181 countries and concluded that Cronkite News had published 53 — more than any other journalism school in the country.

The stories were done by students in Cronkite News, the news division of Arizona PBS, as well as the Howard Center for Investigative Journalism and other Cronkite programs and classes. Topics ranged from public health and the pandemic to homelessness and immigration.

These are stories that often require many hours of additional reporting, said Reynolds Professor in Business Journalism and former Interim Dean Kristin Gilger.

"A misconception about solutions journalism is that it's sort of 'feel good journalism'," she said.

**"Solutions journalism tackles complex societal issues, and it takes time and effort to report how communities and people have tried to address those issues. Even if their approaches didn't work, there's something to be learned."**

The Cronkite School was one of the first journalism schools in the country to teach the reporting approach, introducing it into intermediate journalism courses in 2016, Gilger said.

Maureen West, former lecturer at the Cronkite School, led the effort.



## Online degree programs grow at a fast pace

**Cronkite students are now almost evenly divided between those pursuing degrees on the ground and those enrolled in online programs.**

As of fall 2021, there were 1,296 students enrolled in Cronkite's undergraduate and graduate degree programs taught entirely online and 1,274 in immersion on-campus programs.

The fast-growing online programs include bachelor's degrees in Digital Audiences, Digital Media Literacy and Mass Communication Media studies. At the graduate level, the school offers a master's in Digital Audience Strategy as well as a Digital Audience Strategy graduate certificate.

The programs draw students from almost every state and dozens of countries throughout the world, said Senior Associate Dean Jessica Pucci, who oversees the school's online offerings.

Many students are seeking to gain expertise and knowledge to help them advance in their careers, while others want to launch new careers, she said.

"Demand for audience development and digital marketing skills continue to rise in media organizations, of course, but also beyond them," Pucci said. "As retailers, governments, artists, software companies and consumer services all try to grow and engage their audiences, our students are well suited to heed that call. They're armed

with not only the technical and analytical skills across sites, apps, search and social, but they have the Cronkite School's signature foundation in storytelling."

Pucci said Cronkite was among the first journalism programs to offer online degree options for students interested in such opportunities.

"Our growth stems from creating new learning opportunities across mass communication fields, and keeping a close pulse on the industry helps us identify those opportunities strategically," she said.

The offerings:

### **Digital Audiences, B.S.**

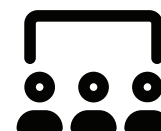
Virtually all companies and organizations are looking for professionals who know how to grow and engage audiences online. This program prepares students to reach audiences strategically with social media campaigns, search engine optimization and audience analytics. Courses include audience research and behavior, audience engagement and digital audience growth.

### **Digital Media Literacy, B.A.**

The newest of Cronkite's online degree programs responds to unprecedented changes in how people interact with and use information. Students learn how to use cutting-edge tools and tactics to analyze the context of the media people consume, preparing them to be at the forefront of the important strategic and ethical issues related to digital media, including auto-

1,296

1,274



mation, verification, security and privacy.

### **Mass Communication and Media Studies, B.A.**

Students in this program gain a deep and nuanced understanding of the growing importance, power and influence of media around the world. The program explores global mass communication issues from all dimensions: societal, cultural, historical, political, economic, technological and legal.

### **Digital Audience Strategy, M.S.**

This program prepares students to design and execute large-scale strategies for connecting digital audiences through a data-driven, hands-on curriculum. Students learn to measure and analyze how consumers interact with content online, on social media, within search engines and on mobile devices. They work with real-world clients to develop, test and execute audience growth strategies in real time.

### **Digital Audiences, Graduate Certificate**

Students learn to measure and analyze how consumers interact with content online, on social media and on mobile devices. Using those measurement skills, students develop strategies and tactics to grow audiences through search engine optimization, search engine marketing, paid and organic social media campaigns, and digital content creation. ■

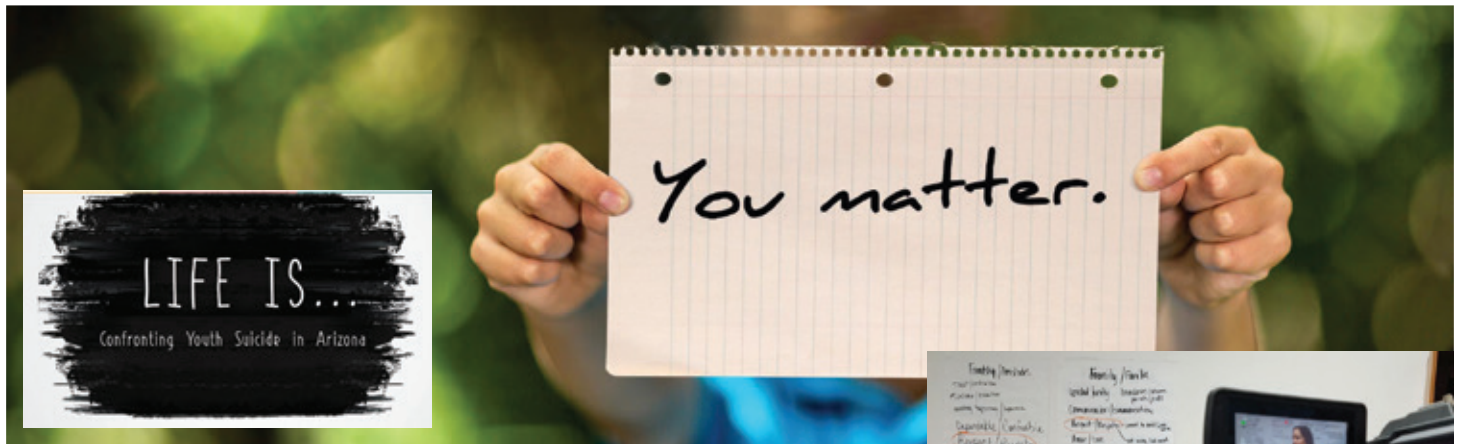
"We describe SJ as another tool in the toolbox — another way to approach a story," West said. "It's not watchdog journalism, but more like guide dog journalism — guiding readers to efforts that are designed, even in small ways, to combat societal problems."

"Some students will go on to become reporters and others won't," Gilger added.

"But I think that no matter what students end up doing, learning the discipline that is required to do this kind of reporting will be useful to them. It's research. It's really getting all of your facts and information and casting a wide net. And that can be useful no matter what you do." ■



Allie Barton, a Cronkite graduate student, edits copy on election night 2020 for Cronkite News. Photo by Russell Prim



## Student documentary confronts troubling youth suicide rates in Arizona

By Kasey Brammell

A student-produced documentary about a disturbing rise in youth suicide in Arizona reached almost 1 million people across the state.

The documentary, titled “Life is...,” was produced with a grant from the Arizona Community Foundation and with the support of the Arizona Broadcasters Association. It analyzes the underlying societal, cultural, technological and medical causes behind the state’s troubling statistics and offers resources and potential solutions.

About 600,000 people viewed “Life Is...” during a January 2021 simulcast on all major commercial television stations in the state as well as on Arizona PBS and Spanish-language stations. **In all, 27 television stations aired the project simultaneously.** Nearly as many experienced it through radio broadcasts and online.

In addition, Cronkite News, the news arm of Arizona PBS, published accompanying digital and text stories at [confrontingyouthsuicideaz.com](https://confrontingyouthsuicideaz.com) and shared them with news organizations around the state for re-publication.

Several dozen Cronkite students and faculty worked on the project over the course of a year, during a pandemic, under the direction of Cronkite Visiting Professor David Ariosto, an author and journalist who has managed, produced and written for National Geographic, Time Magazine, NPR, Reuters, CNN, and Al Jazeera America.

Ariosto said students started with data, but went well beyond that to tell the stories of people affected by youth suicide and

help uncover possible solutions.

The data alone are staggering. According to the Centers for Disease Control, youth suicide rates climbed 56% across the U.S. from 2007-2017, making it the second leading cause of death for young people. Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, the CDC estimates that one in four young people have contemplated taking their life.

In Arizona, the rate of suicide among adolescents has consistently exceeded the national average.

Because the topic is so complex and because many of those participating have had some kind of personal experience with suicide or attempted suicide among families or friends, the school took a slow approach, said Kristin Gilger, Reynolds Professor of Business Journalism who was interim dean at the time.

Before reporting started, students and faculty met with suicide prevention experts from ASU and communication organizations who walked them through not just the data but the emotional and psychological aspects of reporting on youth suicide. And they spent an entire semester learning about and reporting on the topic before moving into the production phase.

“There’s no doubt that working on this project was transformative for many students as they grew to understand the many complex factors that contribute to youth suicide and the many people affected,” Gilger said.

Gilger said she heard from one mother “who is desperately worried that her son might try to end his life. She said the

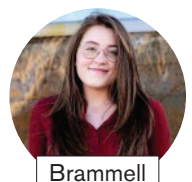


Cronkite broadcast reporter Melanie Porter records an interview with Johanna Moya Fábregas, executive director of Con Mi Madre, a nonprofit that encourages education for young Latinas. Photo by Melanie Porter

documentary gave her hope — and the resources — to try to do something before that happens.”

The youth suicide project follows a multi-year partnership between the Cronkite School and Arizona broadcasters to shed light on some of Arizona’s most pressing issues. In 2015, “Hooked: Tracking Heroin’s Hold on Arizona” focused on the growing perils of heroin and opioid use in Arizona. In 2017, “Hooked RX: From Prescription to Addiction” built on the 2015 effort by investigating the alarming rise in prescription opioid abuse in the state.

The Cronkite School is partnering once again with the Arizona Community Foundation in 2022, this time to explore the housing crisis in Arizona, especially as it relates to health outcomes. Students will start with listening sessions with Maricopa County residents who are disproportionately impacted by Arizona’s housing crisis and interview civic and industry leaders. They then will produce multimedia and multilingual solutions journalism that addresses the most commonly identified community challenges and possible solutions. ■



Brammell



Nino Abdaladze	Piper Hansen	Stephen Perez
Madeline Ackley	Jack Harris	Ellen Pierce
McKenzie Allen-Charmley	Carly Henry	Katherine Pippin
Jennifer Alvarez	Daja E. Henry	Kevin Pirehpour
Mona Aly	Lauren Hernadez	Kimberly Rapanut
Agya K. Aning	Emily Holdaway	Sean Rice
Nisa Ayrar	Andrew Howard	Kiera Riley
Marcella Baietto	Jonah Hrkal	Averi Roberts
Allison Barton	Noah Huerta	Jordan Rogers
Jonmaesha Beltran	Chase Hunter B.	Tiara Rose
Daniella Beserra	Stephanie Innes	Allison Row
Heidi Blakemore	Delia C. Johnson	Scott Rowe
Matthew Boerner	Chloe Jones	Daniella Rudoy
Molly Bohannon	Katelyn Keenehan	Raphael Romero Ruiz
Chad Bramlett	Yasmine Kenney	Jill Ryan
Kailey Broussard	Matt Keough	Meagan Sainz-Pasley
Carmen Cardenas	Alexandria Krusniak	Shaun Salehi

Cronkite students amassed more than 150 awards in both student and professional competitions in 2020 and 2021.

The honors include the school's third consecutive Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Award for reporting on social justice, bringing to six the total number of RFK awards the school has won.

## Cronkite students dominate in local, regional and national contests

José-Ignacio Castañeda	Gareth Kwok	Ariel Salk
Perez	Jamie Landers	Jake Santo
Samantha Chow	Franco LaTona	Devan Sauer
Kelsey Collesi Ekeberg	Justin Liggin	Calah Schlabach
Krystiana Cornella	Mary Lou Long	Grayson Schmidt
Evan Desai	Christian Lopez	Lauren Serrato
Ariana Diaz	Haley Lorenzen	Tara Shultz
Erin Dragoo	Nicole Ludden	Mackenzie Shuman
Chase Drieborg	Megan Lupo	Alex Simon
Molly Duerig	Paulina Machado	Jessica Snyder
Katelyn Dyer	Anya Magnuson	Emma Sounart
Alexandra Edelman	Tyler Manion	Jordan Spurgeon
Jordan Elder	Harrison Mantas	Aspen Stanton
Farah Eltohamy	Megan Marples	Molly Stellino
Juan Escobedo	Caitlynn McDaniel	Katie Surma
Ike Everard	Kelsey McEwen	Katherine Sypher
Shane Everett	Dylan McKim	Alyssa Tarpley
Christina Fankhanal	Brianna McKissick	Beno Thomas
Joel Farias Godinez	Anne Mickey	Nathaniel Thrash
Jamie Fields	Valerie Moffat	Sarah Toth
Hannah Foote	Ben Moffat	Lisa Travis
Alexa Fuenmayor	Samantha Morales	Connor Van Ligten
Alyssa Fuentes	Chayanne Moreno	Emma VandenEinde
Veronica Galek	Mikala Morris	Anthony J. Wallace
Alex Gallagher	Juliana Morton	Natalie Walters
Alejandro Gamez	Sean Murphy	Rosaura Wardsworth
Emilee Gawel	Wyatt Myskow	Kyley Warren
Kylee Gillespie	Nicole Nelson	Ellena Whitfield
Tina Giuliano	Nicole Neri	Carissa Wigginton
Rachel Gold	Ellen O'Brien	Zachariah Willoughby
Jacquelyn Gonzales	Grace Oldham	Isaac Windes
Israel Gonzalez	Andrew Onodera	Connor Wodynski
Jake Goodrick	Maia Ordoñez	Alexandra Wolfe
Jennifer Gordon	James Paidoussis	
Yael Grauer	Haillie Parker	
Mythili Gubbi	McKenzie Pavacich	
Michael Gutnick	Kyla Pearce	
Derek Hall	Joseph Perez	

In addition, a team of Cronkite students from the Howard Center for Investigative Journalism beat out thousands of entries to win the top national collegiate prize, the "Best in Show" award, presented annually by the Society of Professional Journalists.

### Other highlights:

Cronkite won more awards than any other journalism school in both the SPJ national competition and the Broadcast Education Association's Festival of Media Arts competitions.

Students swept all three first-place student prizes in the Society for Advancing Business Editing and Writing's 26th Annual Best in Business Awards contest.

They won all three of the top awards in the student category of the national Association of Health Care Journalists Awards for Excellence in Health Care Journalism.

The school again was ranked in the top five overall in the Hearst Journalism Awards, often referred to as the Pulitzers of college journalism.

In some cases, students successfully competed against professional journalists. In the Best of the West contest, for example, the Carnegie-Knight News project "Kids Imprisoned" outperformed professional journalists from established newspapers such as the Los Angeles Times and The Seattle Times to win the top award for online presentation.

### Arizona Press Club Awards

Cronkite students captured nearly 30 awards — including seven professional awards and all eight first-place awards in the student categories — in the 2020 Arizona Press Club contest.

### Professional Awards

#### Statewide health reporting

- First: **Stephanie Innes**, "We have seen so much death": Treating the sickest COVID-19 patients"

#### Spanish-language feature reporting

- First: **Allison Barton**, Cronkite Noticias, "Piden equidad en tratamientos de problemas alimenticios en gente de color"
- Second: **Tina Giuliano**, Cronkite Noticias, "Falta de conocimiento de vital técnica hace más vulnerables a vecindarios hispanos"

#### The Don Bolles Award for Investigative Reporting

- Second: Staff of the Howard Center for Investigative Journalism, "Homeland Secrets," **José-Ignacio Castañeda Perez, Alexandra Edelmann, Joel Farias Godinez, Derek Hall, Nicole Ludden, Maia Ordoñez, Devan Sauer** and **Mackenzie Shuman**

#### Statewide education reporting

- First: **Daja E. Henry** and **Kimberly Rapanut**, Carnegie-Knight News21, "Hit twice as hard": Children with disabilities face onslaught of challenges"

#### Statewide business reporting

- First: **Katie Surma, Anne Mickey** and **Jamie Fields**, "Nationwide Insurance bought one of the state's most valuable parcels of land in Scottsdale. It also got a great deal"
- Third: **Molly Bohannon, Jamie Fields, Megan Lupo** and **Natalie Walters**, "Closed racetracks are leaving many thoroughbreds with nowhere to go"

### First-place Student Awards

#### Student investigative reporting

- First: **Wyatt Myskow, Andrew Onodera** and **Piper Hansen**, The State Press, "ASU's sexual assault investigation processes leave survivors traumatized, often without justice"

#### Student news reporting

- First: **Delia C. Johnson** and **Jill Ryan**, Carnegie-Knight News21, "'Super-predator' legacy: How children end up in the adult justice system"

#### Student features reporting

- First: **Jonmaesha Beltran**, Cronkite News, "'I wanted to do more than hold a sign': Street medic crew forms out of Black Lives Matter protests"

#### Student arts, culture and food

- First: **McKenzie Allen-Charmley**, Cronkite News, "Many Navajos face pandemic without running water, tribal members urged to 'lift each other up'"

#### Student sports reporting

- First: **Averi Roberts**, Cronkite News, "Lending a hand(print): Athletes raise awareness for missing, murdered Indigenous women"

#### Student photojournalism: News

- First: **Valerie Moffat**, The State Press, "George Floyd BLM protests"

#### Student photojournalism: Sports

- First: **Samantha Chow**, The State Press, "Gymnast"

#### Student photojournalism: Features

- First: **Samantha Chow**, The State Press, "Feeling blue"

### AAJA Journalism Excellence Awards

**Jack Harris** won the Asian American Journalists Association's General Excellence Award in the student category for a story about a young trailblazer who is making a name for herself as a professional skateboarder.

Harris, now a sports reporter for the Los Angeles Times, wrote the story, "Young, small, but mighty: Skateboarder Sky Brown shreds path toward Olympics," while interning at the newspaper.

AAJA annually recognizes outstanding coverage of Asian American and Pacific Islander issues.

### Associated Collegiate Press

**Andrew Howard** won the 2020 Story of the Year from the Associated Collegiate Press for his breaking news story on the resignation of Kurt Volker from his position as the U.S. Special Envoy for Ukraine following reports of collaboration between himself, Ukraine and former President Donald Trump.

Howard's story, published in The State Press, was the first to confirm Volker's resignation.

### Other ACP awards:

- Third: **Delia Johnson** and **Kyle Warren**, Cronkite News, "'We can help

ourselves: 'Native women come together to confront high rates of maternal mortality'"

- Honorable mention: **Molly Stellino**, The State Press, "ASU abandoned most of its operational sustainability goals"

The ACP is a division of the national Scholastic Press Association.

### Association of Food Journalists

Two students received 2020 awards from the professional food journalists' association.

#### Best Writing on Food, Student Division

- First: **Molly Stellino**, Cronkite News, "Produce rescue: Nogales group feeds vulnerable communities as it fights food waste"
- Third: **Carissa Wigginton**, Cronkite News, "Hatchery near Flagstaff undergoes \$3.3 million in renovations to raise trout in the desert"

### Association of Health Care Journalists Awards

Cronkite students dominated the national AHCJ Awards for Excellence in Health Care Journalism, sweeping the top three spots in the student category.

- First: Howard Center for Investigative Journalism, "COVID's Invisible Victims" and "Caring for COVID's Invisible Victims," **Madeline Ackley, Agya K. Aning, Andy Blye, Molly Bohannon, Austin Fast, Audrey Jensen, Chloe Jones, Anne Mickey, Shaena Montanari, Jill Ryan, Lidia Terrazas, Natalie Walters, Helena Wegner** and **Helen Wieffering**
- Second: **Cronkite News**, "COVID in Indian Country"
- Third: **Cronkite News**, "Life Is ... Confronting Youth Suicide in Arizona"

### AVA Digital Awards

**Public Relations Lab** students brought home seven awards in the 2020 AVA Digital Awards program for creating web-based productions and a digital marketing campaign for various clients.

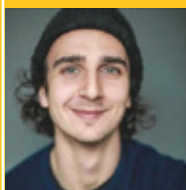
### Digital Marketing

- Gold: **Chad Bramlett, Jennifer Gordon, Brianna McKissick, Daniella Rudy** and **Lisa Travis**, "Power play: Facing futures together" for Phoenix Children's Hospital

... continued on page 54



## Crowder Award winner captures powerful moments



**Alberto Mariani** won first place in the 2021 Greg Crowder Memorial Photojournalism Awards for his images documenting the 2020 social justice protests triggered by George Floyd's death, the Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol and the effects of the deadly pandemic.

Senior **Marlee Smith** placed second in the contest, which honors the best photojournalists each year at the Cronkite School. **Samantha Chow**, also a senior, earned an honorable mention.

Mariani, who plans to graduate in spring 2022, received a \$1,000 prize, and his award-winning photos will be on display on the third floor of the Cronkite building for a year.

Originally from Milan, Italy, Mariani moved to the U.S. in 2012. He has been a photographer for Cronkite News on both the health and general assignment beats. He also works as a freelance photographer for the Arizona Center for Investigative Reporting.

"I love capturing powerful moments," he said. "It's our job to capture history as photographers." ■

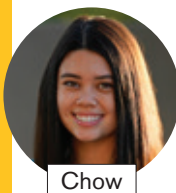
The award was established by Greg Crowder's parents, **Troy and Betsy Crowder**, in memory of their son, who graduated from ASU in 1980 and was a longtime photojournalist at The Press-Enterprise in Riverside, California.



Photos by  
Alberto Mariani



Smith



Chow



Photo by Marlee Smith



Photo by Samantha Chow



Photo courtesy of Scotty Gange

## Cronkite graduate recognized as nation's best college sportscaster

Judges for the Jim Nantz Award for the Best Collegiate Sportscaster took one look at **Scotty Gange's** reel and knew they had a winner.

Gange was given the 2020 Jim Nantz Award, presented by the Sportscasters Talent Agency of America to the nation's best collegiate sportscaster. The award is named in honor of award-winning CBS sportscaster Jim Nantz and is part of STAA's 12th Annual All-America Program for aspiring sportscasters.

"Just twice in the history of the Nantz Award have I watched an applicant's reel and said to myself, 'That's the award winner,'" said Jon Chelesnik, owner and CEO of STAA. "Scotty's was the second time. It was like watching a good TV show. I didn't want it to end. Scotty's style is a great mix of journalism skills, creativity and personality. Since he's won the award, I've also found he is a fabulous person."

In addition to Gange, five other Cronkite students earned honorable mention awards in the competition: **Lyle Goldstein, Tyler Manion, TJ Mathewson, Josh Schaefer** and **Jackson Zuber**.

Students from universities across the country compete for the title, which was

announced during a live broadcast on the CBS Sports Network, during which Nantz made a surprise appearance to praise Gange's work.

"There's just a lot of things that I see there that are just way beyond your years, so from right here, from me, I'm just so honored to have your name on this award," Nantz said.

Gange, a San Diego native who graduated in May 2020, is now a sports reporter and anchor at KUSA-TV in Denver.

While at Cronkite, he was a sports news anchor and reporter for Cronkite News, sports director for Blaze Radio, anchor and football reporter for House of Sparky, play-by-play sports broadcaster for the Pac-12 Networks, and baseball beat writer and reporter for the Walter Cronkite Sports Network.

"So many people helped me over the past few years to grow in my skills, and it was so fun doing it," Gange said. "So winning this award kind of felt like the perfect cherry on top of the perfect experience at Cronkite for me." ■



Gange



Goldstein



Manion



Mathewson



Schaefer



Zuber

### Web-based Production

- Gold: **Chad Bramlett, Jennifer Gordon, Brianna McKissick, Nicole Nelson, Daniella Rudoy** and **Lisa Travis**, "Ten Across water summit: Event recap"
- Gold: **Nicole Nelson, Nathaniel Thrash, Zachariah Willoughby** and **Alexandra Wolfe**, "PRSA Phoenix Chapter website redesign" for the Public Relations Society of America, Phoenix Chapter
- Gold: **Ellen Pierce** and **Lisa Travis**, "The Humphrey Fellowship Program: The American Impact" for the U.S. Department of State, Institute of International Education
- Platinum: **Ellen Pierce** and **Lisa Travis**, "African Humphrey Voices: Building a better future for our continent" for the U.S. Department of State, Institute of International Education
- Platinum: **Ellen Pierce**, "Future security forum promotional video" for the ASU Center on the Future of War
- Platinum: **Israel Gonzalez, Ellen Pierce** and **Emma Sounart**, "Save Camelback: A Phoenix icon" for Save Camelback Mountain organization

### Batten Medal

Cronkite News students were part of a national project documenting health care workers who died during the COVID-19 pandemic that was awarded a prestigious Batten Medal from the News Leaders Association.

"Lost on the Frontline" was created by The Guardian and Kaiser Health News to collect the obituaries of more than 3,600 health care workers who died of the virus. Cronkite News reporters were invited to join the national effort and contributed 10 profiles.

Cronkite students who contributed to the project are **Anthony Wallace, Katherine Sypher, Jonmaesha Beltran, Lauren Serrato, Kyla Pearce, Hannah Foote, Caitlynn McDaniel** and **Haley Lorenzen**.

### Best of the West

**Carnegie-Knight News21's** "Kids Imprisoned," a project about the American juvenile criminal justice system, was awarded first for online presentation in the 2021 Best of the West contest.

News21 outperformed professional journalists from established newspapers in the Western U.S., placing above the Los Angeles Times and The Seattle Times.



### BEA Festival of Media Arts Awards

Cronkite students again won the most news division awards in the 2021 National Broadcast Education Association's annual Festival of Media Arts competition. Students took home 26 awards in TV, radio, documentary, podcast and video categories.

Additionally, **Caitlynn McDaniel** won a "Best of Festival Award," the top prize in the student news category. Her radio story "Wildlife Trade," which aired on KJZZ radio, the Phoenix NPR station, explored the impact of illegal wildlife trade on the health of animals and humans and how it can lead to zoonotic diseases such as COVID-19.

#### First-place winners:

##### Radio Feature

- Tie: **Caitlynn McDaniel**, "Wildlife Trade," and **Jill Ryan**, "School plans for COVID-19"

##### TV Newscast (4 to 5 times a week)

- **Alexa Fuenmayor** and **Chayanne Moreno**, Nov. 9, 2020, newscast

##### TV News Anchor

- **Tyler Manion**, anchor reel

##### Radio Hard News

- **Jill Ryan**, "One-on-one learning in Flagstaff"

##### Educational Program

- **Molly Duerig**, "Operation Agent Touch"

### Copper Anvil Award

Cronkite **Public Relations Lab** students won a Copper Anvil Award of Merit in Integrated Communications for its "Native America" public relations campaign to help millennials better understand Native American culture. The Copper Anvil Award encourages and recognizes excellence in public relations. It is considered one of the highest honors in the industry.

### dotCOMM Awards

PR Lab students won top honors in the 2020 and 2021 international dotCOMM awards, which honor excellence in web creativity and digital communication.

### 2020 Awards

#### Digital Marketing Campaign

- Gold: Partnership with Native Americans
- Platinum: "Antstream Arcade," **Erin Dragoo**, **Juan Escobedo**, **Samantha Morales** and **Katherine Pippin**

### 2021 Awards

#### Online Feature Story

- Gold: **Ariana Diaz**, "The success of Charli Turner Thorne: How she has become one of ASU's greatest coaches"

#### Interactive Brand Experience/Digital

##### Marketing Campaign

- Gold: e-commerce experience strategy for Taylor Morrison homebuilders
- Platinum: media pitch, "Big Brothers Big Sisters — mentors needed"

### Education Digital Marketing Awards

Students in Cronkite's Digital Audiences Lab won top marks in the EDMA Awards for their work developing digital campaigns for clients. The competition recognizes the best educational websites, digital content, electronic communications, mobile media and social media in the country.

Cronkite students who participated in the DA Lab project are **Matthew Boerner**, **Carmen Cardenas**, **Ariana Diaz**, **Chase Drieborg**, **Shane Everett**, **Alyssa Fuentes**, **Alex Gallagher**, **Emilee Gawel**, **Kylee Gillespie**, **Jacquelyn Gonzales**, **Alexandria Krusniak**, **Mary Lou Long**, **Paulina Machado**, **Caitlynn McDaniel**, **Juliana Morton**, **Tiara Rose**, **Allison Row**, **Sarah Toth** and **Ellena Whitfield**.

#### Annual or Community Report

- Gold: **Digital Audiences Lab**, "Global Sport Matters strategic plan"

#### Digital Publication Campaign

- Gold: **PR Lab**, "Future Tense fictional stories campaign"

#### Social Equality

- Gold: **PR Lab**, Zócalo Public Square, "When Women Vote"

### Education Writers Association

Student reporter **Anthony J. Wallace** and photographer **Megan Marples** won first in feature writing in the EWA contest, competing in the professional category, for their story, "It's creating a new normal: A Navajo school district and its students fight to overcome amid COVID-19," published at Cronkite News.

### Edward R. Murrow Student Awards

The **Carnegie-Knight News21** project "Kids Imprisoned" won two out of the eight Murrow Awards awarded to college journalists in 2021.

The project won a Murrow for best digital

reporting and another for best podcast.

The podcast, produced by students

**Anthony J. Wallace** and **Katherine Sypher**, told the story of how kids in the juvenile justice system have dramatically different outcomes, depending on the law in the places they live and the adults involved in their cases.

The Murrow Awards are administered by the Radio Television Digital News Association to honor outstanding achievements in broadcast and digital journalism nationally.

### EPPY Awards

Cronkite students took more awards than any school in the country in the collegiate division of Editor & Publisher magazine's prestigious national EPPY Award contest honoring the best in digital news publishing. Students earned a total of five awards, and received top honors in three categories. The **Howard Center for Investigative Journalism** won two of the first-place honors and was a finalist in a third category.

#### Best News Story on a College Website

- First: **Howard Center** for Investigative Journalism, "COVID'S invisible victims"
- Finalist: Howard Center for Investigative Journalism, "Operation Agent Touch," **Molly Duerig**, **Alejandra Gamez**, **Rachel Gold**, **Mythili Gubbi**, **Grace Oldham**, **James Paidoussis**, **Meagan Sainz-Pasley**, **Mackenzie Shuman** and **Beno Thomas**

#### Best Feature Story on a College Website

- First: **Madeline Ackley**, Cronkite News, "Deported U.S. veterans find aid, comfort in a Tijuana bunker"

#### Best College Investigative or Documentary Story or Project

- First: **Howard Center for Investigative Journalism**, "Homeland Secrets"
- Finalist: **Carnegie-Knight News21**, "Kids Imprisoned"

### Hearst Journalism Awards

Cronkite finished among the top five journalism schools in the country in the prestigious Hearst Journalism Awards program, often referred to as the Pulitzers of college journalism.

Students placed second in broadcast, third in writing, seventh in multimedia and 17th in photojournalism. The school finished fifth overall.

More than 100 journalism schools around the country compete throughout the year in

monthly contests that culminate in a national championship for top scorers. Cronkite students **Katelyn Keenehan** and **Emma VandenEinde** competed in the 2020-2021 championships, with VandenEinde placing second in radio and Keenehan earning third in television.

### Students who placed in the top 12 in the monthly contests:

#### Television News

- First: **Katelyn Keenehan**, Cronkite News, "Pascua Yaqui water pipeline," "COVID-19 rise in prisons" and "Minimum wage rally"
- Second: **Tyler Manion**, Cronkite News, "Rural COVIDAZ," "Democrats celebrate Biden nomination" and "Social media mental health"

#### Sports Writing

- Fifth: **Michael Gutnick**, Cronkite News, "Tale of two brothers: Brinson, Steenn Pasichnuk share hockey journey from ASU to San Jose"
- 12th: **Jordan Rogers**, Cronkite News, "Lawsuit claims concussions turned ASU linebacker Jason Franklin's dreams to despair"

#### Audio News & Features

- Fifth: **Emma VandenEinde**, Blaze Radio, "Rosie's house" and "Thanksgiving drive through"

#### Investigative

- Seventh: **Kevin Pirehpour**, Cronkite News, "Neighbors hope for relief from crematorium smoke as COVID-19 deaths decrease"

#### Personality/Profile Writing

- Sixth: **Jake Santo**, Cronkite News, "She's got a part of us with her': Donor family confident son's heart is in the right place"
- 10th: **Jamie Landers**, Teen Vogue, "Aging out of foster care during COVID-19: Pandemic brings additional challenges"

#### Multimedia Journalism — Innovative Storytelling and Audience Engagement

- Ninth: **Jennifer Alvarez**, Cronkite News, "Virtual pow wow dancing"

#### Multimedia Journalism — News or Enterprise/Individual

- 12th: **Ike Everard**, Free Cap Hill project, "The people of Chop"

### Hermes Creative Awards

Cronkite **PR Lab** students won three 2020 Hermes Creative Awards honoring the creative industry's best publications,

branding collateral, websites, videos and advertising, marketing and communication programs.

#### Integrated Marketing Campaign, Print Media

- Gold: "Antstream Arcade," **Erin Dragoo**, **Juan Escobedo**, **Samantha Morales** and **Katherine Pippin**
- Microsite, Electronic Media/Social Media
- Gold: "Drug Prevention Task Force," **Mona Aly**, **Krystiana Cornella**, **Yasmine Kenney** and **Alyssa Tarpley**
- Communication-Marketing Campaign
- Honorable mention: "Native Aware," **Nisa Ayril**, **Daniella Beserra**, **Heidi Blakemore**, **Veronica Galek**, **Noah Huerta**, **Justin Liggin**, **Mikala Morris**, **Tara Shultz** and **Aspen Stanton**

### IBS Media Awards

Blaze Radio, ASU's student radio station, took home top awards in the Intercollegiate Broadcasting System Media Awards, including one for best university station serving more than 10,000 students. Best Streaming Station with more than 10,000 students

#### ▪ Blaze Radio

Best Baseball/Softball Play-by-Play

#### ▪ Gareth Kwok

Best Sports Talk Program — The Spurge

#### ▪ Jordan Spurgeon

### IRE Awards

The **Howard Center for Investigative Journalism** won the top collegiate award in investigative journalism from Investigative Reporters & Editors for its probe of federal police shootings.

"Homeland Secrets" took first place in the large student category for revealing how agents from Homeland Security Investigations, a little known investigative unit of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, were involved in civilian shootings around the country, many of which had not been publicly investigated. **Carnegie-Knight News21's** "Kid Imprisoned," an investigation of juvenile justice in America, was a finalist.

And ASU's **The State Press** also was a finalist in the small student category for a reporting project that led to new university policies on helping survivors of sexual assault.

### Los Angeles Press Club Awards

Two Cronkite students won top awards competing against professionals in the

2020 Los Angeles Press Club Awards.

They also took two first places and a second place in student categories.

### Professional Competition — Online

#### News Feature — General News

- First: **Grayson Schmidt**, Cronkite News, "Role reversal: Teen caring for father with Alzheimer's shares her experience"

#### Sports News or Feature

- Second: **Evan Desai** and **Scott Rowe**, Cronkite News, "St. John Bosco: NCAA 'football factory' Is based on brotherhood"

### Student Competition

#### Feature Writing — Print or Online, Sports/Arts

- First: **Jack Harris**, "At Los Alamitos' opening day of horse racing, a feeling of 'less stress'," published by the Los Angeles Times

#### Feature Writing — Print or Online,

#### Sociopolitical Feature

- First: **Grayson Schmidt**, Cronkite News, "Return to 'the Rock': Original Alcatraz occupier retraces steps during 50th anniversary"

#### Personality Profile, Public Personalities — Any platform

- Second: **Jack Harris**, "Young, small, but mighty: Skateboarder Sky Brown shreds path toward Olympics," published by the Los Angeles Times

### Maggie Awards

The State Press, ASU's student media outlet, won three awards in the Maggie competition, which honors excellence in publishing and media each year.

#### Best Print Cover, Student

- The State Press Magazine Money Issue, March 2020, **Ben Moffat** and **Connor Wodynski**

- The State Press Magazine Principles Issue, Nov. 2020, **Matt Keough**

#### Best Print Article, Student:

- **Joseph Perez** and **Kiera Riley**, The State Press, "Tripped up: Psychedelics" emergence in American health care

### NABJ Salute to Excellence

Cronkite students won four first-place awards in the National Association of Black Journalists' 2020 Salute to Excellence competition.

#### Digital Media — Graduate — Online Sports Reporting

- **Alex Simon**, Cronkite News, "Becoming Kyler Murray: Cardinals quarterback refined skills in heart of football country"



#### Digital Media — Undergraduate — Online News Reporting

▪ **Farah Eltohamy**, Cronkite News, “2020 Census: Middle Easterners and North Africans don’t fit the box”

#### Digital Media — Undergraduate — Online Sports Reporting

▪ **Stephen Perez**, Cronkite News, “More than a name: Son of a Hall of Famer, Hamilton’s Brenden Rice hopes to forge own path”

#### Newspaper — Undergraduate — Feature Reporting

▪ **Chase Hunter B.**, The State Press Magazine, “Rashad Shabazz’s Chicago”

#### National Native Media Awards

The Native American Journalists Association honored these students for their work covering Indian Country. Two students competed against professional journalists in the professional and associate divisions to win awards.

#### Professional Division

##### Print/Online Print/Online — Best Health Coverage

▪ First: **McKenzie Allen-Charmley**, Cronkite News, “Many Navajos face pandemic without running water, tribal members urged to lift each other up”

#### Associate Division

##### Print/Online — Best Coverage of Native America

▪ First: **Madeline Ackley**, Cronkite News, “Native American veterans still struggling to get the health care they were promised”  
 ▪ Third: **Anthony J. Wallace**, Cronkite News, “Pandemic shines light on complex coexistence of modern times, traditional ways on Navajo Nation”

#### Student Division

##### TV — Best Feature Story

▪ First: **McKenzie Allen-Charmley**, Cronkite News, “Navajo Firewood”

##### Print/Online — Best Feature Story

▪ First: **Joseph Perez**, The State Press, “Live más: Overnight at the Taco Bell on Apache”  
 ▪ Second: **Joseph Perez**, The State Press, “My mom is a nurse in the face of a pandemic”  
 ▪ Third: **Noah Huerta**, Turning Points Magazine, “The tight-knit town of Guadalupe”

## Award-winning work reveals injustices, challenges facing those with disabilities



Photo courtesy of propublica.com



Smith Richards



Cohen



Chavis

An investigation into the practice of isolating school children for misbehavior won the top award in the 2020 **Katherine Schneider Journalism Award for Excellence in Reporting on Disability, the only journalism contest devoted exclusively to coverage of disability.**

The award is given annually by the National Center on Disability and Journalism at Cronkite. Journalists working in digital, print and broadcast media from around the world compete for awards and cash prizes totaling \$8,000.

First in the large media market category was awarded to “The Quiet Rooms,” an investigation by ProPublica Illinois and the Chicago Tribune. The project, written by Jennifer Smith Richards of the Chicago Tribune and Jodi S. Cohen and Lakeidra Chavis of ProPublica Illinois, exposed the practice of locking children, many of whom have disabilities, in rooms for isolated “timeouts.”

“Excellent reporting reveals unconscionable horrors inflicted on children with disabilities,” said Lisa Davis, an author and faculty member in the Communication Department at Santa Clara University, who served as one of the judges.

Mike Elsen-Rooney of USA Today took second among large media outlets for “Two boys with the same disability tried to get help,” which explored what happened when the families of two boys from different backgrounds — living just 15 blocks apart

in New York City — tried to get help for their children, both of whom struggled to learn to read.

Joseph Shapiro of National Public Radio won third in large media for his story “COVID-19 is a disability issue,” about the challenges faced by people with disabilities during the pandemic.

First in the small media market category went to “Ignored: South Dakota is failing Deaf children,” an investigative series by Shelly Conlon of the Argus Leader in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. The project documented how decisions by lawmakers, educators and state officials have led to a dire lack of resources, accommodations and Deaf teachers.

Janine Zeitlin of The News-Press/Naples Daily News won second in small media for “Forsaken,” a five-part series that followed a young woman for a year, revealing the inadequacies of both Florida’s foster care and mental health systems.

Ed Williams of Searchlight New Mexico took third for “Restraint, seclusion, deception,” which revealed that not only are isolation rooms and restraint techniques misused in Albuquerque, New Mexico, schools, the actions are often kept secret.

The awards contest was established in 2013 with the support of Schneider, a retired clinical psychologist who has been blind since birth and who also supports the national Schneider Family Book Awards. ■

Print/Online — Best News Photo

▪ First: **Raphael Romero Ruiz**, azcentral.com, "Protest at border wall site on Hia-Ced O'odham territory ends in standoff"

Print/Online — Best Editorial

▪ First: **Raphael Romero Ruiz**, The State Press, "Forgotten Footsteps"

**NYX Marcom Awards**

Public Relations Lab and Digital Audiences Lab students were recognized with 2020 NYX Marcom Awards for excellence in marketing and communication. The international competition is administered by the Association of Marketing and Communications Professionals.

Strategic Communications, Marketing/Promotion Campaign, Digital Marketing

▪ Gold: **Digital Audiences Lab**, "Future Tense fictional stories campaign"

PR Media Relations/Publicity

▪ Gold: PR Lab, "Big Brothers Big Sisters — mentors needed," **Katelyn Dyer, Emily Holdaway** and **Jessica Snyder**.

▪ Gold: PR Lab, "Fiesta Bowl wishes for teachers," **Emily Holdaway, Christian Lopez, Kelsey McEwen** and **Rosaura Wardsworth**.

Content Marketing & Writing

▪ Gold: PR Lab, "ASU athletics coach and student athlete stories," **Christina Fankhanal, Christian Lopez, Sean Murphy** and **Rosaura Wardsworth**.

**Online News Association**

"State of Emergency," by Carnegie-Knight News21 students, won the top student Pro-Am award in the 2020 Online Journalism Awards. **Allison Barton, Kailey Broussard, Molly Duerig, Jordan Elder, Jake Goodrick, Yael Grauer, Carly Henry, Anya Magnuson, Harrison Mantas, Ellen O'Brien, McKenzie Pavacich, Ariel Salk, Alex Simon** and **Isaac Windes**

The project examined state and federal responses to natural disasters, highlighting large discrepancies in state and federal aid provided to communities across the country.

The Online Journalism Awards honor data journalism, investigative journalism, public service, climate change reporting and community engagement.

**REMI Awards**

PR Lab students received 11 Remi awards at the 2020 WorldFest-Houston film festival for film and video production and commercials and public service announcements. Of more than 4,500 entries, 10% were selected for awards.

Video production

▪ Silver: **Ellen Pierce**, "Future security forum promotional video" for ASU Center on the Future of War

▪ Silver: **Chad Bramlett, Jennifer Gordon, Brianna McKissick, Daniella Rudoy** and **Lisa Travis**, "Power Play: Event recap" for Phoenix Children's Hospital Foundation

▪ Silver: **Ellen Pierce** and **Lisa Travis**, "African Humphrey Voices: Jake Okechukwu Effoduh" for U.S. State Department Humphrey Fellowship 40th anniversary celebration

TV Commercials/ PSA

▪ Silver: **Lisa Travis**, "Save the date to power up with Phoenix Children's Hospital" for Phoenix Children's Hospital Foundation

▪ Silver: **Nicole Nelson, Nathaniel Thrash, Zachariah Willoughby** and **Alexandra Wolfe**, "Public Relations Society of America website" for Public Relations Society of America, Phoenix Chapter

▪ Bronze: **Chad Bramlett, Jennifer Gordon, Brianna McKissick, Daniella Rudoy** and **Lisa Travis**, "Power Play: Meet Brendan, AKA Blue Bulldog" for Phoenix Children's Hospital Foundation

▪ Bronze: **Israel Gonzalez, Ellen Pierce** and **Emma Sounart**, "Save Camelback: The legend of the landmark"

▪ Bronze: **Ellen Pierce** and **Lisa Travis**, for videos celebrating the U.S. State Department Humphrey Fellowship 40th anniversary celebration

TV Commercials/PSA

▪ Bronze: **Ellen Pierce** and **Lisa Travis**, "The Humphrey Legacy" for U.S. State Department Humphrey Fellowship 40th anniversary celebration

▪ Bronze: **Chad Bramlett, Jennifer Gordon, Brianna McKissick, Daniella Rudoy** and **Lisa Travis**, "Power Play: Meet Brendan, AKA Blue Bulldog" for Phoenix Children's Hospital Foundation

**Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Award**

The Carnegie-Knight News21 investigative report "Kids Imprisoned," a project about

juvenile justice in America, won the prestigious 2021 Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Award. It was the third consecutive year that News21 has won the award and the sixth RFK for the school — the most of any journalism school in the country.

The RFK Journalism Awards program honors outstanding reporting on issues that reflect Kennedy's passions, including human rights, social justice and the power of individual action in the U.S. and around the world.

Cronkite students who participated in the "Kids Imprisoned" project were **José-Ignacio Castañeda Perez, Kelsey Collesi Ekeberg, Daja E. Henry, Delia C. Johnson, Chloe Jones, Franco LaTona, Haillie Parker, Kimberly Rapanut, Jill Ryan, Calah Schlabach, Katherine Sypher** and **Anthony J. Wallace**.

**Rocky Mountain Emmy Student Production Awards**

Cronkite students took home seven Student Production Awards in five categories in the 43rd annual Rocky Mountain Emmy Awards, bringing to 64 the number of awards students have won since 2009.

College Sports

▪ **Sean Rice**, reporter, "Young at heart on water skis"

College Public Affairs/Community Service

▪ **Jordan Elder**, reporter, "COVID compilation"

College Craft: Talent

▪ **Jordan Evans**, weather

▪ **Marcella Baietto**, anchor

College Craft: Video Essay (Single Camera Only)

▪ **Katelyn Keenehan**, videographer / editor, "The Miracle Wish"

College News: General Assignment

▪ **Dylan McKim**, reporter, "Firefighter Cancer"

Sports, College

▪ **Shaun Salehi**, reporter, "Hockey pucks for more"

**SABEW Awards**

Cronkite students took the top prizes in all three student categories of the Society for Advancing Business Editing and Writing 26th Annual Best in Business Awards contest honoring the best business reporting in the country.



### Student Journalism — Projects and Collaborations

• First: **Katie Surma, Anne Mickey** and **Jamie Fields**, “Nationwide Insurance bought one of the state’s most valuable parcels of land in Scottsdale. It also got a great deal,” published in The Arizona Republic

### Student Journalism — Stories for Professional Media Outlets

• First: **Natalie Walters**, “It’s as if Hurricane Katrina hit every city around the U.S.: How COVID is impacting 5 of the largest nonprofits,” published by the Dallas Morning News

• Honorable mention: **Aggya K. Aning**, “How journalism interns reported on places they’ve never been over the summer,” published at Poynter.org

### Student Journalism — Stories for Student Media Outlets

• First: **Lauren Hernandez** for a three-part series on how California’s wildfires affect farmworkers, wineries and cannabis growers, published at Cronkite News

### SPJ National Mark of Excellence Awards

Cronkite students won five first-place awards in the 2020 Society of Professional Journalists Awards competition, recognizing the best collegiate journalism nationally. The **Howard Center for Investigative Journalism’s** 2020 investigation “Operation Agent Touch,” was named “Best in Show” among the first-place winners.

The Howard Center project revealed how agents of ICE’s Homeland Security Investigations unit engaged in sex acts with women they thought could be victims of sex-trafficking, torpedoing a major undercover operation in Western Arizona.

#### The national SPJ winners:

##### Feature Photography (Large)

• **Nicole Neri**, “Capturing and documenting trauma in Panama”

##### Radio News Reporting

• **Caitlynn McDaniel**, “Phoenix area restaurants survival”

##### Television Sports Reporting

• **Michael Gutnick**, “Skating through adversity”

##### Online In-Depth Reporting

• **Calah Schlabach, Nino Abdaladze, Daja Henry, Anthony J. Wallace**, “Panama - where the world waits at

## “Luanda Leaks” wins top Barlett & Steele Business Journalism Awards



Isabel dos Santos  
Photos courtesy of Frontline



An investigative team of the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists Frontline, The New York Times and 33 other media partners won the top prize in the 14th annual Barlett & Steele Awards for Investigative Journalism for uncovering a massive corrupt global empire operating in dozens of countries.

The Center for Public Integrity and the Los Angeles Times won the silver award and MLK50: Justice Through Journalism, in partnership with ProPublica’s Local Reporting Network, won the bronze award.

The awards, honoring the best investigative business journalism of the year, are given annually by the Cronkite School’s Donald W. Reynolds National Center for Business Journalism. The awards are named for the renowned investigative team of Donald L. Barlett and James B. Steele, whose honors include two Pulitzer prizes and scores of national journalism awards.

Earning top honors and a \$2,500 prize in the 2020 awards was “Luanda Leaks,” reported by ICIJ and investigative teams from around the world. Drawing on leaked records, the investigation centered on Isabel dos Santos, Africa’s wealthiest woman, who built a reputation on the false claim that she made her fortune through business acumen, grit and entrepreneurial spirit.

The investigation was sparked by a leak of more than 715,000 documents and involved hundreds of interviews with sources in Angola. The journalists uncovered numerous examples of public money

paid to offshore firms controlled by, or connected to, dos Santos.

“Pulling from thousands of pages of leaked documents, public records and in-depth interviews, the ICIJ and its partners wove a powerful narrative about international corruption on a massive scale,” said the judges. **“The reporters built tools to mine data in innovative ways and released their searchable database to make their work even more transparent.”**

The Center for Public Integrity and the Los Angeles Times earned the Silver Award and \$1,500 for the series “When the wells run dry,” which revealed how California risks shouldering a multi-billion dollar bill because of deserted oil wells and how the public is paying a price for lax past practices.

The “Profiting from the Poor” series by Wendi C. Thomas of MLK50: Justice Through Journalism, working with ProPublica’s Local Reporting Network, received \$500 and the Bronze Award for detailing how thousands of poor residents in Memphis have been sued for unpaid hospital bills and how two local health institutions profited from the poor.

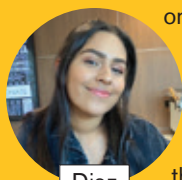
The judges for this year’s awards were Cesca Antonelli, editor-in-chief of Bloomberg BNA; Paul Steiger, executive chairman of ProPublica; and Dan Hertzberg, longtime financial journalist for The Wall Street Journal and Bloomberg News. ■

## Cronkite PR Lab students place in international contest

Students in the Public Relations Lab at the Cronkite School won top honors in the international dotCOMM awards, which honor excellence in web creativity and digital communication.

The PR Lab won two gold awards for campaigns developed by students, including one for Sun Devil Athletics at ASU, as well as a platinum award for earned media.

"It's such a huge honor to win awards for our work this semester," said senior **Ariana Diaz**, who worked



Diaz

on several of the projects. "Our entire class put an incredible amount of effort into our projects during the semester, so being recognized for it has been one of the most exciting things to happen to me during my time at Cronkite. I'm sure my peers feel the same."

One of Diaz's contributions was an online feature story about women's basketball head coach Charli Turner-Thorne, one of ASU's most successful coaches, which won a Gold Award for feature website stories.

The goal was to paint a full picture of one of ASU's most successful coaches through interviews with those who know her best in a professional capacity — assistant coaches, players and athletic administrators.

"I'm probably the proudest of the Gold award I received for that story," Diaz said. "I worked incredibly hard on it for a few weeks, setting up interviews, conducting interviews and doing a ton of research. It was challenging to write a story without talking directly to her, but I'm glad I had that new experience."

The lab won a second Gold Award for interactive brand experience within a digital marketing campaign. Students developed a creative strategy for Taylor Morrison homebuilders to enhance the e-commerce experience for prospective homebuyers despite physical closures due to the pandemic. Key elements of the



Students in the Cronkite Public Relations Lab (from left) Kiarra Spottsville, Ariana Diaz Victoria and Alyssa Avilla, won top honors in the international dotCOMM awards. Photo courtesy of Redd Legend Media

campaign included a specialized production platform for showcasing model homes virtually, nonprofit components to engage the local communities in grand opening events, and the use of influencers to assist in marketing custom features unique to Taylor Morrison communities. The finished product will allow for a more accessible home-buying process during and beyond COVID-19.

The third award, a platinum in earned media, article or news placement, recognized a media pitch for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Arizona on the impact of mentorship.

"The awards showcase the amazing breadth of work the students performed this past semester," said PR Lab Director Lisa Schmidtke. "The client needs were so very different, but the quality of student work and creativity in their approaches was consistent throughout."

The dotCOMM Awards is an international competition that recognizes the best in web creativity and digital communication while spotlighting the role of creatives. It is administered and judged by the Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals, one of the largest and oldest evaluators of creative work in the marketing and communications industry. ■

*The story was published by ASU Athletics at [thesundevils.com](https://thesundevils.com).*

America's door"

Online News Reporting

• Staff of **Howard Center for Investigative Journalism**, "Operation Agent Touch"

### SPJ Regional Mark of Excellence Awards

Cronkite swept eight categories and tallied more than 51 awards in the regional SPJ competition, more than triple any other school in the region, which includes Arizona, California, Guam, Hawaii, Nevada and the Mariana Islands.

Students earned 16 first-place finishes that advanced them to the national competition and swept nine categories. In addition to the national winners listed above, the first-place regional finishes were:

**Non-Fiction Magazine Article**

• **Katherine Sypher, Anthony J. Wallace**, "Thoughts, prayers & stem cells"

**Radio In-Depth Reporting**

• **Caitlynn McDaniel**, "Zoonotic diseases traced to illegal wildlife trade"

**Radio Sports Reporting**

• **Jonah Hrkal**, "Gabe Trujillo, Spanish-speaking PBP voice of AZ Cardinals"

**Television Feature Reporting**

• **Jennifer Alvarez**, "Virtual pow wow dancing"

**Television General News Reporting**

• **Dylan McKim**, "Firefighter cancer"

**Television In-Depth Reporting**

• **Katelyn Keenehan**, "COVID prisons"

**Broadcast Feature Videography**

• **Jennifer Alvarez**, "Virtual pow wow dancing"

**Video game reporting**

• **Connor Van Ligten**, "Arizona Smash community faces challenge during pandemic"

**Best All-Around Television News Magazine**

• Cronkite Sports Report: Season 13, Episode 1, **Cronkite News: Phoenix Sports Bureau**

**Online Sports Reporting**

• **Jordan Rogers**, "Lawsuit claims concussions turned ASU linebacker Jason Franklin's dreams to despair"

**Online Feature Reporting**

• **Jonmaesha Beltran**, "I wanted to do more than hold a sign: Street medic crew forms out of Black Lives Matter protests" ■



## Grant programs promote innovation in local TV news

**For the past three years, the Cronkite School has worked with television stations around the country to encourage innovation in local TV news — the leading source of news in America.**

The projects are supported by two grants totaling more than \$2 million from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

In recent years, it has become clear that the local television news industry needs to reinvent itself on both broadcast and digital platforms “to attract and engage a new generation of news consumers that do not watch linear newscasts — and probably never will,” said Andrew Heyward, Cronkite senior research professor for TV news and a former president of CBS News.

The two grant projects tackle the challenge in different ways — by working with news executives at local TV stations around the country to help them identify and implement innovations in their newsrooms and by providing funding for stations to try new technologies.

Since 2018, TV news leaders from more than 20 stations have participated in a 10-month Local TV News Innovation initiative in which they learn change-management strategies and tools and work with professional coaches to apply them to specific projects at their stations.

The stations represent major ownership groups, including ABC, E.W. Scripps Co., Univision, Gray Television, Morgan-Murphy Media, and Graham Media as well as Cronkite News and Arizona PBS at the Cronkite School.

The stations have identified substantial challenges, said Cronkite Professor of Practice John Misner, who has been helping to lead the Local TV News Innovation project. Those challenges include creating relevant content for younger, multicultural consumers; digital content creation and distribution, including social media strategy and streaming services; employee recruitment and retention; enhanced community service,



Cronkite News reporter Jamie Landers talks about a TikTok experiment conducted by the newsroom's innovation squad.

especially to underserved audiences; and new business models

Participants have undertaken a range of projects — from hyperlocal targeting of news to developing a new system for tracking and integrating digital and broadcast content, Misner said.

Other projects have focused on the nature and quality of the news that stations deliver. WSOC-TV, the Cox station in Charlotte, North Carolina, for example, decided to take a lead in tackling Charlotte's affordable housing crisis, producing regular news coverage and prime-time specials as well as an online resource guide in English and Spanish for the 22 counties the station serves.

Going deep on a topic was a shift, said News Director Mike Oliveira. “TV really needs to be that in-depth place to get people to come and stay, and so we couldn't just do 20-second readers or (voice-overs) anymore,” he said. “It's not going after the equivalent of clickbait for TV. It's a long play to get people to see us in a different light, and, hopefully, when they come to TV, they feel like we're going to be thoughtful and a good choice for them.”

While stations developed projects, the Knight-Cronkite News Lab reported on them weekly at [cronkitenews.com](https://cronkitenews.com), building a loyal following among local broadcast newsrooms around the country interested in innovations being tried at

other stations. So far, the lab, headed by Heyward, has published nearly 200 articles about experiments in everything from new newscast formats and platforms to new ways of delivering TV content over the internet.

The Local TV News Innovation project also taps students for ideas that could benefit the industry. An “innovation squad” in Cronkite News conducts experiments with new tools, storytelling techniques and formats. For example, students launched a “30 TikToks in 30 Days” experiment, sharing Cronkite News headlines, twists on viral trends and music videos, and other content on the video-sharing social media platform.

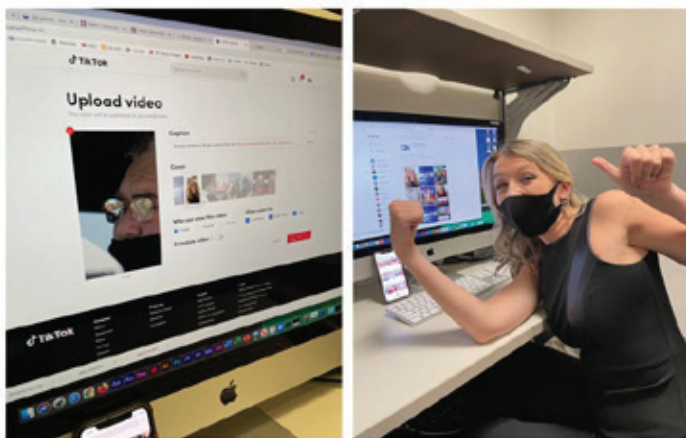
And this year, a team of student workers is completing two projects for commercial station groups: a series of video explainers aimed at young social media users for Phoenix Scripps station KNXV (ABC15), and “Ghosted,” a digital documentary series for the NBC station group on recent college graduates struggling to launch themselves post-pandemic.

For the second Knight-funded project, the Cronkite School is matching creators of cutting-edge tools with TV newsrooms willing to test them.

To identify the biggest technology needs and stations' capacity to do testing, the National Association of Broadcasters



**To identify the biggest technology needs and stations' capacity to do testing, the National Association of Broadcasters surveyed 948 member stations in small to medium markets.**



Reporter Katelyn Keenehan uploads a TikTok video about efforts to vaccinate grocery store employees against COVID-19. Photo courtesy of Cronkite News

surveyed 948 member stations in small to medium markets. The survey, along with followup interviews, helped identify what technology companies to approach, said Melanie Asp Alvarez, Cronkite assistant dean in charge of the project.

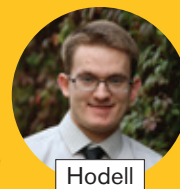
Stations or station groups then applied for and received mini-grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$50,000 to bring the technologies to their newsrooms, she said. Among the projects are efforts to implement geo-targeted content through Next-Gen TV, enable reporting from remote locations, translate content for Spanish-speaking audiences, and improve audience engagement through data insights, she said.

In awarding the technology grant, Paul Cheung, former Knight Foundation director of journalism and technology innovation, said, "Smart applications of technology will make or break a news organization's ability to serve their audience. Yet few news organizations have the capacity to vet and test these new technologies. This grant is to match cutting-edge tools with news organizations in order to foster a technology-conscious culture." ■

**John S. and James L. Knight Foundation** supports transformational ideas that promote quality journalism, advance media innovation, engage communities and foster the arts. The foundation provides core support for the **Local TV News Innovation** initiative as well as the school's **Carnegie-Knight News21** program and the **Knight Chair in Journalism**. For more, visit [knightfoundation.org](https://knightfoundation.org).

## Cronkite hosts Dow Jones Digital Media Training

By Nicholas Hodell



For the ninth year, the Cronkite School hosted a digital media training program for college journalism students from across the country.

**Twenty-one students participated in the 2021 training**, which is part of the national Dow Jones News Fund program that helps young journalists improve their skills in key areas and places them in summer internships at media organizations.

The digital media program, conducted virtually for the second consecutive year, included sessions on visual storytelling, newsroom metrics, basic coding, infographics and audio production. Students also created a multimedia project, "Back in Business," which documented the uneven road to reopening during a pandemic.

After completing the nine-day program, students went on to paid internships at companies such as The Wall Street Journal, AccuWeather, The Arizona Republic, USA Today (Nashville) and The Austin American-Statesman.

Other Dow Jones programs in business reporting, data journalism and multiplatform editing were held at other universities at the beginning of summer.

Paige Barnes, a recent graduate of Columbia College in Chicago and a summer intern at AccuWeather in Pennsylvania, said she learned skills that will serve her well for years. "I hope to pass these down to other journalists," she said. "This training is just the tip of the iceberg for hopefully where I can launch my career."

Jessica Davis, a senior director at USA Today in Nashville, said she's always glad to have Dow Jones students in her newsroom.

"Dow Jones interns are so talented, smart and ambitious" — so much so that she had three digital media interns in her newsroom in summer 2021 and hired one from last summer, she said.

Michael Wong, Cronkite Career Services director, who oversees the training, said the Dow Jones program **"helps ensure that a new generation of diverse, young journalists gets off to a fast start in their careers with intense skills training, full-time internships and mentoring. It's an amazing program, and we are thrilled to host so many talented students each year."** ■

The **Dow Jones News Fund** sponsors training programs for college students across the country. The nonprofit is supported by the **Dow Jones Foundation, Dow Jones and Co.**, publisher of **The Wall Street Journal** and other news organizations. Its mission is to encourage high school and college students to pursue journalism careers. It also offers ongoing training and grant-funded programs for educators.



## News Co/Lab helps adults learn to better navigate information

Sorting out good information from bad information online is a challenge for even the most sophisticated media consumer.

The News Co/Lab at the Cronkite School is trying to make it easier with a media literacy course offered free online.

The first version of the self-paced course, “Mediactive: How to Participate in Our Digital World,” was offered in the weeks leading up to the fall 2020 presidential election. More than 3,000 people jumped in, learning how to spot misinformation, access sources and participate responsibly in creating and sharing information online.

The course was so successful that the News Co/Lab, under Managing Director Kristy Roschke, has updated the content to give it more of a science and health focus and created a Spanish-language version in collaboration with ASU en México.

Getting accurate science and health information has become more important than ever during the pandemic, Roschke said. And the new Spanish-language version broadens the scope of the course to take into account audiences outside of the U.S.

**“The Cronkite School is heavily invested in helping people grow their media literacy skills, and we think it’s important to reach people in multiple languages since we live in a diverse state and country,”**



Roschke said. “Eventually, we’d like this to be more global in scope because there is a need everywhere.”

Mia Armstrong of the ASU en México project worked with the News Co/Lab to create the new material for Spanish-speaking audiences. She said polarization and mistrust in digital media are issues that go well beyond the U.S.

**“We hope to provide people with tools that are useful to their particular situation, put these problems into a broader context and just create spaces for conversation across borders about these topics,” she said.**

The Mediactive project is part of a \$2-million investment from the Facebook Journalism Project in a variety of media literacy projects across the country.

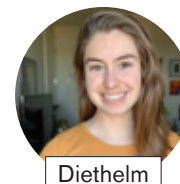
In addition to the self-paced course, the News Co/Lab has offered a number of webinars with experts in journalism, audience engagement, digital security, and health and wellness. Past guests include Jimmy Wales, co-founder of Wikipedia; Howard Bryant of ESPN; Laura Helmuth of Scientific American; and Grisel Salazar of Periodismo CIDE in Mexico City.

“Mediactive participants have loved the opportunity to connect with internationally recognized experts through our event series,” Roschke said. “We plan to offer more events later in 2021, both in English and in Spanish in partnership with ASU

en México.”

Enrollment for both versions of “Mediactive: How to Participate in Our Digital World” is open to anyone with an email address through ASU Continuing and Professional Education. ■

*Students Lisa Diethelm and Nicholas Hodell contributed to this report.*



Diethelm



Hodell

For more information and to enroll, go to: [cpe.asu.edu](https://cpe.asu.edu).

For more information on News Co/Lab, go to: [newscollab.org](https://newscollab.org)

## Indian Country Today grows its base from the Cronkite School

**Indian Country Today has come a long way since opening up in a beauty shop in Rapid City, South Dakota.**

The year was 1981, and the paper, called the Lakota Times, put out a weekly edition that covered the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. It was soon the largest weekly in the state.

Fast forward to today. Indian Country Today, soon to be renamed ICT, is a national news organization based at the Cronkite School that covers Native American issues and communities across the country. Multimedia content is posted daily at [indiancountrytoday.com](http://indiancountrytoday.com).

At the start of the pandemic in March 2020, **Indian Country Today launched a daily half-hour newscast, the first national television news program by and about Native peoples.** Recorded daily in Studio A at the Cronkite School, it is carried on public television stations in Alaska, Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Arizona and reaches an international audience in Canada and Australia.

"We all know the stereotypes and narratives that come out of Hollywood and Washington," said Editor Mark

Trahan, a member of Idaho's Shoshone-Bannock Tribe.

"So a news program, one that reaches millions of people via public television stations, has the chance to change the story, showing the beauty, intelligence and aspirations of Native people."

The newscast, which Trahan has been co-anchoring with Executive Producer Patty Talahongva, a Hopi, is getting a new look this fall — and a new anchor in Aliyah Chavez, a recent graduate of Stanford University and a member of the Kewa Pueblo tribe in northern New Mexico.

"One of the cool things about Aliyah as the anchor is that we are reminding our readers and viewers about a long tradition of Indian women as storytellers," said Trahan. "We need young people to see her on TV and think, 'I can do that.' 'I want that job.'"

Since moving to the Cronkite School in 2019, Indian Country Today has grown from a staff of three to about 30 people, counting part-time and contracted employees, Trahan said. In addition to the Phoenix operation, it has bureaus in Washington

D.C., and Anchorage, Alaska, and plans to open a new bureau in Portland this fall.

Nearly 600,000 viewers a month come to its website at [indiancountrytoday.com](http://indiancountrytoday.com), Trahan said, but he has big plans to keep growing.

"We want to be the main voice and have people go to our website every day," he said. "We really want to get over a million page views a month. With the broadcast, we want to continue to add stations so that it's truly a national program."

While its audience primarily consists of people from Indigenous communities across the country, including American Indians, Alaska Natives, and First Nations, Trahan said the goal is to also reach non-Native people so that they become better informed about Native issues.

"One of the unfortunate things with our education system is that people don't really learn how tribes fit into the national framework at an early age," he said. "We all know about cities, counties and states, but very few people know how tribes fit into that."

Indian Country Today was previously owned by the National Congress of American Indians but the organization cut ties in 2021, forcing ICT to become independent almost overnight.

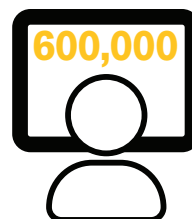
Trahan said the move turned out to be a good one. "We want to be independent," he said. "I think having an independent voice is really critical." The publication is now applying to the IRS for charitable non-profit status. ■



*Student Jackie O'Neill contributed to this report.*



Executive Producer Patty Talahongva co-anchors an episode of Indian Country Today's half-hour newscast.



Indian Country Today Editor Mark Trahan checks on the construction of a new set. Photos courtesy of Indian Country Today





Photo by Paula Maturana

## 2020-2021 Hubert H. Humphrey Fellows

Back row (from left)

**Farhat Javed**, Pakistan

**Delia Marinescu**, Romania

**Fakhar Durrani**, Pakistan

**Sladana Lučić**, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Front row (from left)

**Elma Velić**, Bosnia and Herzegovina

**Xaviera L. Arnhem**, Suriname

**Samantha Refilwe Pilane**, Botswana

**Yana Pashaeva**, Russia

**Teodora Trifonova**, Bulgaria

## Humphrey Fellows make the most of shortened program

For more than a decade, early and mid-career journalists and communications professionals from around the world have made their way to the Cronkite School for 10 months of study and fellowship.

And despite a worldwide pandemic, the 2020-2021 Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship program carried on, almost without interruption. The cohort came from eight countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Hungary, Pakistan, Romania, Russia and Suriname. Due to travel restrictions and safety concerns, the fellows arrived in December, rather than August as they usually do.

In the months before their arrival, fellows participated in a series of virtual sessions to acquaint them with ASU, the Cronkite School and their temporary Phoenix home.

As soon as they arrived, the work began in earnest. Fellows took part in a Humphrey Seminar in which they learned leadership strategies and skills from professors and guest speakers and through group exercises. Each fellow, as their capstone project, created 18-month career plans to act on when they returned home.

Fellows also enrolled in a variety of ASU and Cronkite classes, including digital journalism, documentary production, ethics, philanthropic revenue development and

narrative storytelling. They also did community service, traveled throughout Arizona to popular destinations and cultural sites, and spent time with local mentors and families for a rich immersion in American life.

Once classes ended in April, fellows were placed in newsrooms and other workplaces around the country to gain professional experience and further develop connections with their American counterparts.

In spite of the truncated program, the fellows took full advantage of their fellowships, said John Misner, program curator and Cronkite professor of practice.

"We were so impressed by the fellows' adaptations to the shortened program," he said. "My sense is that they were determined to capitalize on their time with us, and that they did, in terms of their dedication to their coursework and their embrace of the cultural experiences we provided."

Elma Velić, a radio journalist, educator and writer from Bosnia and Herzegovina and a member of the 2020-2021 cohort, said she came to Cronkite hoping to improve her skills "as a journalist, leader, and a human being." All that — and more — happened during her time at Cronkite.

"In the sea of courses at (Cronkite),

there are amazing areas of study, great professors and technology resources available for students," she wrote in a blog for her leadership course. She learned new skills, absorbed more information than she thought possible and discovered new, productive ways to approach her work.

**But it was the relationships formed by working closely with others from around the world that will stay with her. "I believe the biggest lesson we have learned is the one about ourselves," she said.**

The Cronkite School is home to the country's only Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship program in journalism. The U.S. State Department program, in partnership with the Institute of International Education, began in 1978 as a way to provide professional enrichment and non-degree studies at American universities for experienced professionals around the world. The Cronkite School has hosted a total of 111 fellows from 60 countries since 2010. ■

## Summer program introduces international scholars and teachers to the U.S.



Dawn Gilpin  
Photo by Charlie Leight

**After a one-year absence, an international program for media scholars and educators returned to the Cronkite School this summer in a virtual format.**

The Study of the United States Institute Scholars program, sponsored by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. State Department, is a program for teachers and researchers from around the world on media literacy, technology and innovation, democratic principles and teaching practices. It was held at Cronkite in 2019 but canceled in 2020 due to the pandemic.

Bringing it back this year required going virtual, said Dawn Gilpin, Cronkite assistant dean for research, who directed the program. And that meant participants “were working in different time zones and meeting each other over a screen.”

“Despite all of that,” she said, “they unfailingly showed up, were active and engaged, and did all the work. And that says a lot about them.”

In all, 18 media scholars and educators from developing countries took part in three weeks of virtual sessions this summer. They are from countries that include Albania, Costa Rica, Liberia, Vietnam, Finland and Lebanon.

Gilpin said the scholars still may get a chance to see the Cronkite School — and each other — in person. Depending on COVID-19 restrictions, they will be invited to come to the U.S. in 2022 to take part in activities such as visits to media outlets and travel to cultural attractions that are usually part of the summer program.

Plans also are underway to offer webinars and workshops for alumni of the program, she said.

During the virtual portion of their program, the scholars took part in sessions taught by Cronkite faculty and heard from a variety of speakers working in journalism, law, politics and education. They also developed individual research projects based on their personal interests or institutional needs.

Sessions were led by Retha Hill, director of the school's Media Innovation and Entrepreneurship Lab; Kristy Roschke, managing director of Cronkite's News Co/Lab, which specializes in media literacy programs; Marianne Barrett, the Louise Solheim Professor of Journalism at Cronkite; and Dan Barr, a partner at Perkins Coie Phoenix law firm.

Roschke, who led lively discussions on “fake news” and how people consume information on the web, said she learned as much as the scholars did.

**“It’s very easy to be stuck in your own geographic regional bubble,” she said. “A lot of the research in media literacy is done in the West, and to be able to learn from and hear from scholars from all over the world is a gift for me.”**

ASU is one of dozens of universities in the country to host SUSI programs. It is part of a group led by the University of Montana and which includes New York University and the University of Delaware. ■

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## New York Times Editor Baquet accepts Cronkite Award for Excellence in Journalism

**Dean Baquet, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist who is the first Black executive editor to lead both The New York Times and the Los Angeles Times, is the 37th recipient of the Walter Cronkite Award for Excellence in Journalism.**

Baquet was honored during a virtual ceremony in March 2021. The award, which is usually presented each fall at a large gathering of journalists, students, faculty and supporters of the school, was postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The Cronkite School, named after the late CBS News anchor who would have celebrated his 105th birthday this year, has honored a prominent journalist annually since 1984. The award recog-

nizes accomplishments and leadership over the course of a career.

During Baquet's tenure as executive editor, The New York Times has won 16 Pulitzer Prizes, including the 2018 Public Service award for exposing powerful and wealthy sexual predators like Hollywood film producer Harvey Weinstein and other celebrities, which helped spark the rise of the #MeToo movement.

The Times also shared a Pulitzer with The Washington Post in 2018 for coverage of Russian interference in the 2016 election and that country's connections to the Trump campaign, transition team and administration. Most recently, the Times won a Pulitzer for its groundbreaking 1619 Project, which examined the consequences



The New York Times Executive Editor Dean Baquet displays his Walter Cronkite Award for Excellence in Journalism to a virtual audience. Photo by Tobias Rein

of slavery by placing the contributions of Black Americans at the center of America's story.

"Dean's career represents everything that Walter Cronkite stood for," said Interim Dean Kristin Gilger. "Throughout his career, he has stood for the core values of journalism — integrity, honesty and courage — that Cronkite held dear."

"I'm so honored to receive an award named after a pioneering journalist and presented by an esteemed institution doing



**“The world needs more journalists separating fact from fiction and doing the type of reporting that makes their communities and countries stronger and more just.”**

**— Dean Baquet**



The New York Times Executive Editor Dean Baquet talks about journalism and Walter Cronkite's legacy during the virtual awards ceremony. Photos by Tobias Rein



the absolutely critical work of training the next generation of journalists,” Baquet said in accepting the award. “The world needs more journalists separating fact from fiction and doing the type of reporting that makes their communities and countries stronger and more just.”

Baquet first got interested in journalism when, as a young boy, he noticed how the number of customers increased at his family's Creole restaurant in New Orleans after the local newspaper published a positive review. He attended Columbia University in New York City before returning to his hometown to begin his career as a reporter at the States-Item newspaper, which eventually merged with The Times-Picayune.

In 1984, Baquet moved to the Chicago Tribune, where he and a team of report-

ers won the Pulitzer Prize for a six-month investigation into corruption and conflict of interest within the Chicago City Council.

In the early 1990s, he joined The New York Times, where he investigated questionable dealings between New York politicians and private businesses. He was a Pulitzer finalist in 1994 after he and another Times reporter uncovered financial mismanagement at Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield, which led to the resignation of the organization's top executive.

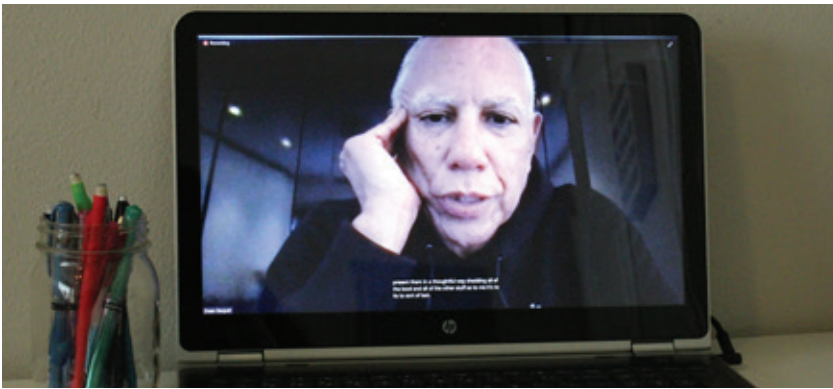
Baquet became managing editor of the Los Angeles Times in 2000, serving in that role for five years before assuming the executive editor position. During his tenure as managing editor and top editor, the newspaper won 13 Pulitzer Prizes. In 2007, after protesting newsroom cuts in Los Angeles, he returned to The New York

Times as Washington bureau chief and then managing editor. He was named executive editor in 2014.

Baquet received an honorary degree from Loyola University New Orleans in 2013 and an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from Xavier University in Louisiana in 2020. In 2018, he received the Freedom of the Press Award from the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press.

Other Cronkite Award recipients include TV news anchors Lester Holt, Robin Roberts, Anderson Cooper, Scott Pelley, Judy Woodruff and Gwen Ifill; football hosts Bob Costas and Al Michaels; newspaper journalists Ben Bradlee, Helen Thomas and Bob Woodward; and media executives Katharine Graham, Al Neuharth and William Paley. ■





Baquet speaks to students during a virtual event after receiving his award. Photo by Carmen de Alba Cardenas

## Baquet to student journalists: 'I'm jealous'

After 45 years as a newspaper reporter and editor, The New York Times Executive Editor Dean Baquet is more convinced than ever that journalism is an honorable profession with a mission of doing good and serving the public.

Baquet shared that belief during an hour-long question-and-answer session with Cronkite students a day after receiving the Cronkite Award for Excellence in Journalism in March 2021.

Baquet answered questions on the future of journalism, objectivity, race and other topics during a discussion moderated by Vanessa Ruiz, Cronkite director for diversity initiatives and community engagement, and

**McKenzie Allen-Charmley**, a third-year journalism student.



Allen-Charmley

In response to a question about what has guided him through challenging times in his career, he said he reminds himself that "it's all in service of a large and important mission. That may seem, you know, treacly or syrupy, but it's actually true."

Baquet told students to stay open to the evolution of objectivity — especially at a time when a new generation of journalists is re-examining its meaning and application.

"Objectivity has been misunderstood by newsrooms, including my own newsroom, including me," he said. Objectivity was originally intended to present an audience

with multiple sides of a story, but it devolved to reporters calling sources to get a quick quote from an opposing viewpoint instead of actually wrestling with the facts.

**"The role of a journalist is to pore through and test all of those ideas and to either draw a conclusion if that's possible or present them in a thoughtful way,"** he said. "So, for me, it's sort of to test notions and come as close as possible to telling the truth."

Baquet said he welcomes a new generation of reporters who are challenging accepted ways of doing journalism. "They should. I challenged some of the notions of the people I worked for," he said. "If you're not going to listen, you really shouldn't be in the business of journalism."

He also acknowledged a race problem in journalism and said he has faced many challenges as a Black man working in newsrooms. Still, he thinks progress is being made. It's easier now to address race issues than when he first entered journalism, he said. Newsrooms "may be slow to change, but I think they get that."

He advised students to not be shy about writing about race. "You shouldn't be shy about bringing what you have to the party. And you really should aspire to the top jobs in the newsroom," he said.

It's a great time to enter journalism, Baquet told students. "Everything is going to look different in 10 years. You're going to get to reinvent this thing. I can't imagine anything more exciting than that. I'm jealous." ■



Photo courtesy of NBC's TODAY Show

## Al Roker to receive next Cronkite Award

Al Roker of NBC's TODAY Show will be the 38th winner of the Walter Cronkite Award for Excellence in Journalism.

Roker, one of the most recognizable personalities on television, will receive the award in spring 2022 at a gathering of journalists, communications specialists, students, faculty and supporters of the school.

Roker joined TODAY full time as a weather-caster in 1996 and co-anchors the "3rd Hour" of the morning show, reaching millions of viewers a week. He also is widely known for hosting NBC's coverage of the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.

Roker has created a brand that extends well beyond television. He regularly interviews celebrities on TODAY's Instagram page, TODAY.com, YouTube and Sirius radio.

For the past 26 years, he has produced numerous TV programs for network, cable, digital and streaming channels. He was the executive producer for the award-winning Coast Guard TV Series, which aired on The Weather Channel and Pluto TV. And he is the author of 13 books, ranging from mysteries to cookbooks to historical narratives.

He is the recipient of 14 Emmy awards for daytime programming as well as live news coverage.

Roker said that when he first heard he was the winner of the prestigious award, "I thought I was being pranked by any number of my colleagues at the TODAY Show. Now that I realize this is legit, words cannot begin to express the privilege and gratitude I have being honored by ASU with this amazing recognition." ■

## "Must See Mondays" lecture series goes virtual, gets bigger

Cronkite's lecture series, "Must See Mondays," moved to a virtual format in fall 2020 and spring 2021 — with some unexpected benefits.

Audiences were larger than ever, and, because speakers didn't have to travel, the school was able to attract a wide range of accomplished professionals who might not otherwise have been able to speak to students, said Kristin Gilger, Reynolds Professor in Business Journalism and former interim dean.

Topics ranged from politics, race and identity to misinformation and trust in the media and from sports journalism and investigative reporting to strategic communications.

### Among the highlights:

**Kristen Welker**, co-anchor of "Weekend TODAY," took time during a busy 2020 election season and again following the presidential election to talk about what it's like to cover the White House and report on national politics during particularly contentious times.

**Soledad O'Brien**, best known for her work as a CNN co-anchor and outspoken commentator on media and politics, spoke to students about how personal identity can both contribute to and get in the way of journalists doing their jobs. She was joined by **Rose Arce**, executive producer of Soledad O'Brien Productions.

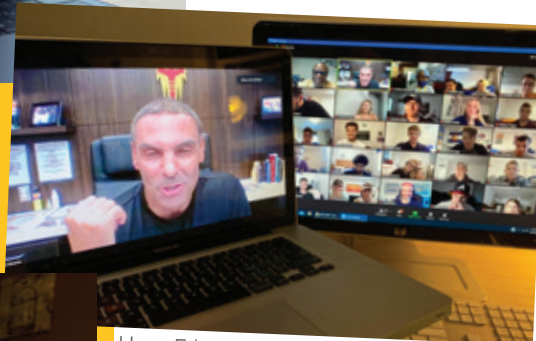
**Manny Garcia**, senior editor at ProPublica, paired up with **Susan Smith Richardson**, then-CEO of the Center for Public Integrity, to discuss what was on the minds of many — objectivity, trust and the future of journalism. Richardson returned in spring 2021 to continue the discussion about misinformation and trust in the media.

**Matt Barrie**, ESPN SportsCenter anchor and studio host for the network's college football coverage, spoke to a large crowd of sports journalism students about the challenges they'll face and the opportunities they can create for themselves. Barrie, who graduated from Cronkite in 2001, also was inducted into the Cronkite Alumni Hall of Fame.

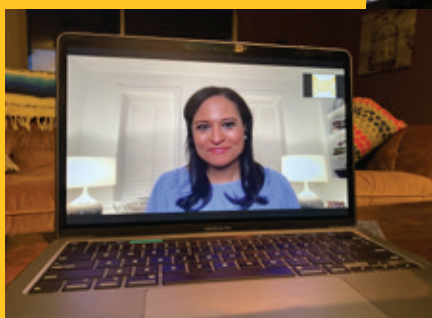
**Wesley Lowery**, correspondent for CBS News who covered the Ferguson, Missouri, protests and reported on the murder trial of the NFL's Aaron Hernandez, spoke about the



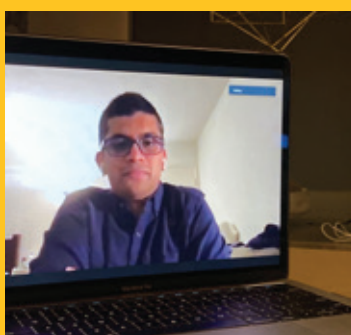
Leonard Downie Jr.



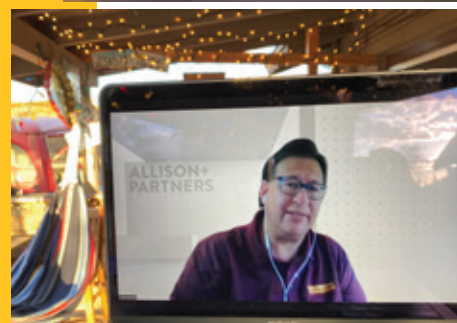
Herm Edwards



Kristen Welker



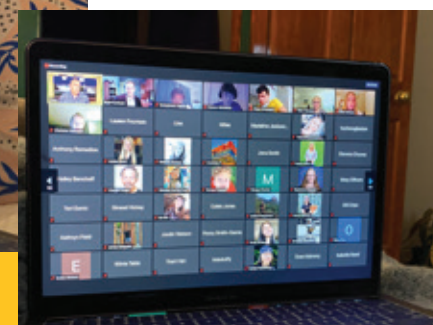
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Scott Pansky

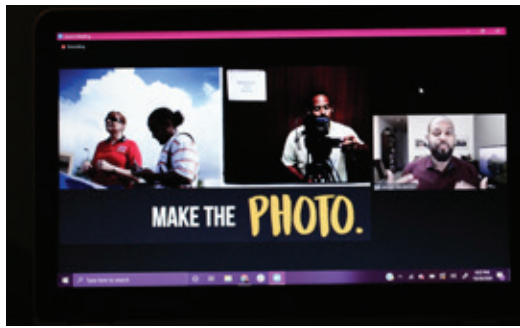


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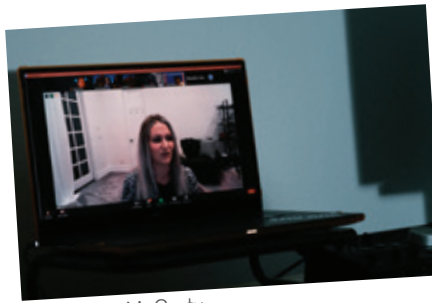


The 2020-2021 "Must See Mondays" lecture series featured speakers from around the country in a virtual format. Photos on this page by Tobias Rein





Jarrod Henderson



Stephanie McCarty

Photos by Russell Prim



Manny Garcia



Matt Barrie

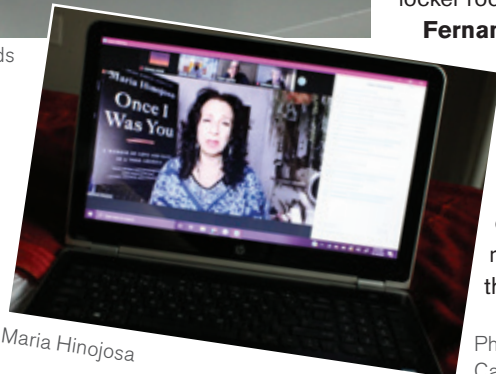
challenges of “Covering the Racial Divide” in America. He told students, “You learn by putting in the repetitions. I always encourage students to start putting those repetitions in as soon as possible.”

**Oliver Ash-Kleine**, founding member of the Trans Journalists Association, urged newsrooms to embrace workplace issues surrounding LGBTQ rights, personal identity and gender-inclusive content “because it leads to more accurate and nuanced coverage as well as a deeper understanding of the communities in which they live.”

**Keith Woods**, chief diversity officer



Keith Woods



Maria Hinojosa

for National Public Radio, and **Maria Hinojosa**, president and founder of Futuro Media and anchor and executive producer for Latino USA, discussed “Reporting on Diverse Communities.” Hinojosa spoke about how she researched her book, “Once I Was You: Love and Hate in a Torn America,” and both tackled heated questions about journalistic practices such as objectivity and use of social media.

**Scott Pansky**, co-founder of Allison+Partners, a global marketing and communications agency headquartered in San Francisco, spoke with Cronkite PR Lab Director Lisa Schmidtke about the importance of finding a great mentor and opportunities for students in the fields of public relations and marketing.

**Liz Clarke**, sports reporter for The Washington Post, and **Master Tesfatsion**, a Cronkite graduate who is now host and senior writer for Bleacher Report, shared their career trajectories and tips for reporting sports stories that go well beyond the locker room.

**Fernando Diaz**, former editor and publisher of The Chicago Reporter, a nonprofit investigative news organization that focuses on racial and socioeconomic injustice reporting, shared examples of investigative reporting that makes a difference. He served as the school's Edith Kinney Gaylord

Visiting Professor in Investigative Journalism in spring 2021, teaching investigative reporting with Lauren Mucciolo, executive producer of Cronkite's Howard Center for Investigative Journalism. Mucciolo moderated the talk.

Cronkite Weil Family Professor of Journalism **Leonard Downie Jr.** talked about his newest book, “All About the Story: News, Power, Politics and The Washington Post,” which traces his 44-year career at the Post, the big events the paper covered and the role the free press plays in American democracy.

Photojournalist and documentary film producer **Juan Arrendondo** showed students his work covering social movements, conflicts and other events in his native Colombia as well as work he has done for The New York Times, National Geographic and other publications. Arrendondo was a visiting professional in visual journalism at Cronkite in 2021.

ASU head football coach **Herm Edwards** and **William C. Rhoden**, writer-at-large at The Undeclared, discussed “Race and Identity in Sport.” Edwards is a Cronkite professor of practice, and Rhoden is a visiting professional at the school.

**Terry Greene Sterling** and **Jude Joffe-Block** shared highlights of their new book, “Driving While Brown: Sheriff Joe Arpaio Versus the Latino Resistance,” which tells the story of the former Maricopa

Photos by  
Carmen de Alba Cardenas

Photos (right and below) by Russell Prim



Oliver Ash-Kleine



Wesley Lowery



Retha Hill, Soledad O'Brien and Rose Arce participate in a virtual "Must See Mondays." Photo by Carmen de Alba Cardenas

County Sheriff's relentless immigration enforcement and the coalition that rose up to stop him, reform unconstitutional policing and fight for Latino civil rights. Greene Sterling is the Cronkite School's writer-in-residence.

Cronkite alumna **Stephanie McCarty**, chief marketing and communications officer for Taylor Morrison, one of the largest home building companies in the U.S. with corporate headquarters in Scottsdale, Arizona, shared insights on how to create and deliver communications that enrich emotional connections between team members and customers and consumers. ■

"Must See Mondays" is held each Monday evening during the fall and spring semesters. For schedules, visit [cronkite.asu.edu](https://cronkite.asu.edu)



## Fall 2020 graduates celebrate virtually

In the midst of a pandemic, **689 students** completed their education at the Cronkite School in December 2020, graduating in a virtual ceremony.

Graduates joined the celebration in real time on YouTube and Facebook Live with their families and friends.

"It's always a proud moment for the faculty to see a class graduate, but this year we're especially proud," said Interim Dean Kristin Gilger in a recorded video. "You are graduating during the most challenging time in higher education that any of us can remember. I'm sure your final year in college — not to mention this graduation ceremony — in no way resembles what you imagined it would be. Yet you have arrived at this moment."

Keynote speaker Mark Trahan, editor of Indian Country Today and a member of Idaho's Shoshone-Bannock Tribe, reminded graduates of the importance of the First Amendment, "especially in these divisive political times," which he described as a moment "both frightening and one that opens up the potential for dramatic innovation."

"Cronkite graduates are coming from a culture of innovation," he said. "Bring that into the media world because it's a huge advantage."

The school awarded 294 bachelor's degrees, with 144 students earning a Bachelor of Arts in Mass Communication and Media Studies and 61 earning a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism and Mass



Student speaker Patricia Vicente. Photos by Tobias Rein

Communication. Fifty students received a Bachelor of Science in Digital Audiences and 39 Bachelor of Arts in Sports Journalism.

In addition, 140 master's degrees were awarded — 95 in Digital Audience Strategy, 19 in Mass Communication, 14 in Investigative Journalism, 10 in Sports Journalism and two in Business Journalism.

Student speaker **Patricia Vicente**, selected for her record of accomplishments as an undergraduate, told her classmates, "Be proud of all that you have done, despite the people who might have been betting against you, the challenges of a global pandemic, virtual learning and reporting, and having to take some measures that have affected our new way of life," she said. "You didn't let that stop you and that is everything to be proud of." ■



**Student  
award  
winners**



Fast



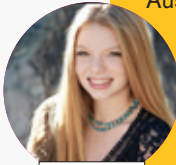
Henry



Castañeda



McKim



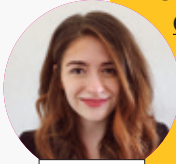
Poore



Mueller



Kingsberry



Eaton



Evin



Jones



Krigner



Gibbs



Ellington

**Awards**

**Outstanding Graduate Students**

Austin Fast

Daja Henry

**Outstanding Undergraduate Students**

José-Ignacio Castañeda Perez

Dylan McKim

Sierra Poore

**Outstanding Graduate Online Student**

Kayla Mueller

**Outstanding Undergraduate Online Student**

Janay Kingsberry

**Highest Undergrad GPAs**

Camryn Eaton

Kara Evin

**Top Innovators**

Misha Jones

Amanda Krigner

**Cronkite Spirit Award**

Talyn Gibbs

**Kappa Tau Alpha National Honor Society**

Remahl Anthony-Aljumaan

Madison Arnold

Camryn Eaton

Austin Fast

Marina Lopez

Justin Lyons

Anya Magnuson

Megan Marples

Caitlynn McDaniel

Dylan McKim

Julianna Morton

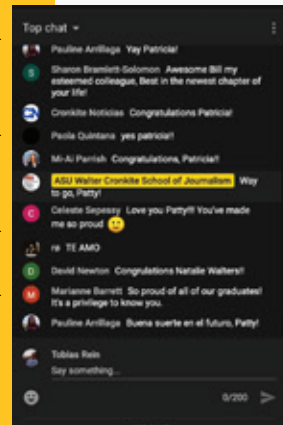
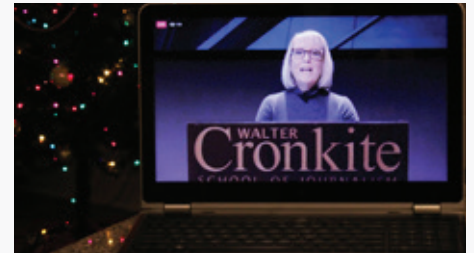
Sierra Poore

Katherine Sypher

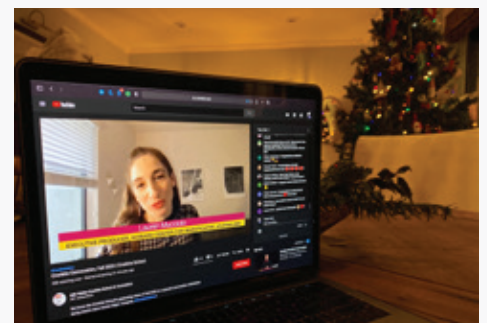
Paige Vannarath

**Moeur Award**

Tiffany Ellington



From top: Interim Dean Kristin Gilger congratulates graduates. Indian Country Today Editor Mark Trahant delivers a convocation address. Family and friends congratulate students in a live chat. Photos by Tobias Rein



From top: B. William Silcock is saluted upon his retirement. Cronkite faculty member Julia Wallace announces a student award. Photos by Tobias Rein



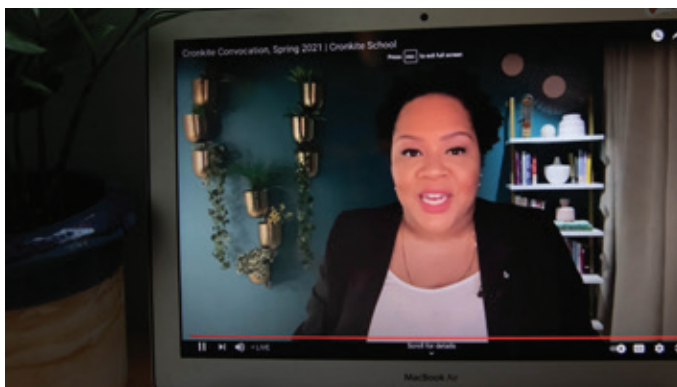
**Kappa Tau Alpha  
National Honor Society**



View the photo album at  
[flickr.com/asucronkite](https://www.flickr.com/asucronkite)



For a complete description  
and list of the student awards, go to  
[cronkite.asu.edu/about/student-awards](https://cronkite.asu.edu/about/student-awards)



Convocation speaker Yamiche Alcindor. Photo by Olivia Dow

## Spring 2021 graduates encouraged to be 'voice of American people'

Yamiche Alcindor, White House correspondent for PBS NewsHour, called on Cronkite's newest graduates to build their careers based on what inspires them, to be patient with themselves and to advocate for change in their workplaces.

Alcindor, who also is a political contributor for NBC News and MSNBC, was the keynote speaker for Cronkite's spring 2021 convocation.

The virtual ceremony celebrated the accomplishments of 604 graduates. More than half earned bachelor's degrees, with 146 receiving a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism and Mass Communication, 61 in Sports Journalism, 128 in Mass Communication and Media Studies, and 53 in Digital Audiences.

The Cronkite School also awarded 107 master's degrees. Ninety-two earned a Master of Science in Digital Audience Strategy, 11 a Master of Mass Communication, two a Master of Arts in Sports Journalism, and two a Master of Science in Business Journalism. One student was awarded a Ph.D. in Journalism and Mass Communication.

Alcindor reminded graduates that recent events — a deadly pandemic, the Jan. 6 siege on the U.S. Capitol, and other threats to democracy — underscore the need for a "vibrant and diverse press that is allowed to dig for truth, to tell it like it is and to directly push back on leaders when they seek to mislead the public."

"You picked an amazing time to dedicate your lives to being professional witnesses, to being the voice

of the American people, to holding leaders accountable," she said.

Alcindor also encouraged graduates to pursue their life's passion and purpose and make career choices based on what they care about. "What is inspiring you? What do you stress about that others overlook?" she asked. "You're already quite certainly a class of problem solvers and survivors, so focus on the areas that move you."

Interim Dean Kristin Gilger congratulated the graduates and underscored the importance of a robust press during these pivotal times.

"You are living through historic times, times when truth — and democracy itself — are being tested, when social constructs are being challenged, when we are being asked to re-evaluate and re-order the way we think about ourselves and others. Journalism is never more important than in moments like these," she said.

Student convocation speaker **Harrison Zhang** praised his classmates for "trusting the process" as they negotiated a college experience quite different from the one they had expected.

"If the last few years have taught us anything, it is to expect the unexpected," Zhang said. "During our time at Cronkite, though, we've been shaped by the amazing faculty, friends, family and interview subjects to grow into the professionals we are today, ready to face the world ahead of us." ■



Student speaker Harrison Zhang. Photo by Olivia Dow

## Awards

### Outstanding Graduate Student Award

Kelsey Collesi Ekeberg

### Outstanding Accelerated Master's Student Award

Karina Espinoza Rios

### Outstanding Undergraduate Student Award

Farah Eltohamy

Sarandon Raboin

Emily Holdaway

Kiarra Spottsville

Andrew Howard

Luis Zambrano

### Outstanding Graduate Online Student Award

Samantha Stull

Joanna Cosper

### Highest Undergrad GPAs

Kylie Cochran

Camille Corpus

### Top Innovator Awards

Michelle Ailport

Jamie Landers

### Cronkite Spirit Awards

Vaughan Jones

Marco Peralta

### Kappa Tau Alpha National Honor Society

Fatma Abid

Joshua Iversen

Alexis Alabado

Aaron Bradley James

Christian Babcock

Grace Oldham

Jamie Bornscheuer

Katy Pruett

Kylie Cochran

Kiara Quaranta

Alexandra Cook

Sarandon Raboin

Lauren Fountain

Hailey Rein

Kylee Gillespie

Abdulsamad Sahly

Erik Hansen

Erica Shipione

Jacob Holter

Emma VandenEinde

Molly Hudson

### Moeur Award

Fatma Abid

Jacob Holter

Jamie Bornscheuer

Molly Hudson

Kylie Cochran

Katy Pruett

Alexandra Cook

Kiara Quaranta

Alexa Fuenmayor

Sarandon Raboin

Hailey Gribner

Hailey Rein

Erik Hansen

Emma VandenEinde

Nicholas Hedges



# Graduation walk gives students a moment in the spotlight

The students arrived in caps and gowns and lined up to walk across the stage to receive their diplomas, accept congratulations from the deans and have their photos taken. They were excited and happy and just a little bit nervous.

ASU's spring 2021 graduation would officially take place online as it had the previous two semesters, but schools and colleges across ASU were given the green light to host in-person celebrations, as long as they were restricted to students only and followed safety protocols.

Cronkite leadership opted for a mini-version of a traditional convocation with the feel, if not the size, of the usual ceremony. The First Amendment Forum was transformed with balloons, congratulatory messages and photo backdrops for students — including a life-sized cardboard cutout of Walter Cronkite.

Dozens of faculty, many of them wearing their own regalia, showed up to cheer on students as their names were called and they walked across the raised platform that serves as the forum stage.

To reduce congestion, 15 students at

a time were scheduled in half-hour slots, and the entire day was livestreamed so parents and loved ones could watch in real time.

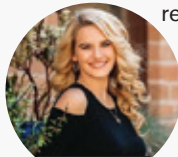
"Wave at the camera," Interim Dean Kristin Gilger told graduates after handing them their diploma covers and posing for photos. "Your family is watching!"

After more than a year of mostly virtual interactions, students seemed to relish the chance to see their classmates and teachers and celebrate reaching an important milestone in their lives. More than 170 students signed up for the Cronkite graduation walk, more than a quarter of students receiving their bachelor's degrees.

"So grateful to have walked today," tweeted **Sedona Rose** after her turn in the forum. "Emotional to say the least. Thank you for an incredible four years. I will treasure it forever."

Sadie Babits, professor of practice in Cronkite News, was almost as excited. "Incredibly proud of our **@Cronkite\_ASU** graduates & over the moon I finally met some of my students after a year of being remote!" she tweeted.

"There was a lot of joy and also some tears," said Assistant Dean Melanie Asp Alvarez, who organized the event along with Director of Events Amber Back and her staff.



Rose



Levi Long poses for a graduation photo with a cardboard cutout of Walter Cronkite. Photo by Kiersten Moss

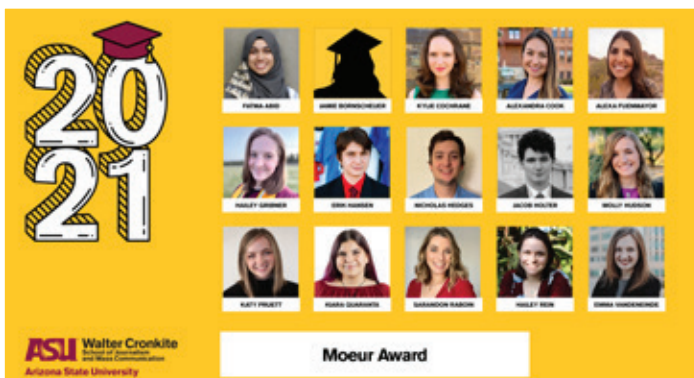
"It turned out to be a very special day."

Students "were so excited and happy and thankful that we staged this event for them," Gilger added. "Several told me they liked this version of graduation even better than a big ceremony — it was unhurried and warm and personal and, I think, especially meaningful for them after a year of COVID isolation." ■



View the complete photo album at [flickr.com/asucronkite](https://www.flickr.com/photos/asucronkite/)

## Student award winners



Ekeberg



Espinoza



Eltohamy



Holdaway



Howard



Raboin



Spottsville



Zambrano



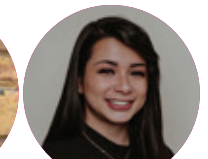
Stull



Cospo



Cochrane



Corpus



Ailport



Landers



Jones



Peralta

**“Now, more than ever,  
we need the unflinching  
and courageous journalism  
in service of justice that  
Ida B. Wells exemplified.”**

**— Susan Smith Richardson**



Photo courtesy of Susan Smith Richardson

**“The way to right wrongs  
is to turn the light of truth  
upon them.”** —Ida B. Wells

## Smith Richardson named to first Ida B. Wells Professorship at Cronkite

Susan Smith Richardson, a nationally recognized journalist and media industry leader, has been named the inaugural Ida B. Wells Professor in Journalism, a post created in honor of Wells, an African American investigative journalist, educator and early leader in the civil rights movement.

Richardson will teach media leadership to Cronkite graduate students, and, in spring 2022, she will teach an advanced reporting class focused on social issues for undergraduate and graduate students.

“Now, more than ever, we need the unflinching and courageous journalism in service of justice that Ida B. Wells exemplified,” Richardson said. “I look forward to working with students and faculty to meet the urgent needs of our time.”

Richardson is deputy editor at The Guardian U.S., where her responsibilities include diversity, equity and inclusion efforts as well as developing coverage on race, identity, power and inequality. She will work to develop collaborations between the British news company and the Cronkite School.

Richardson has been a senior manager and editor at some of the nation's top media outlets. She was chief executive officer of the Center for Public Integrity in Washington, D.C., a leading nonprofit investigative journalism organization, and editor and publisher of The Chicago Reporter, renowned for its coverage of race, poverty and income inequality. She also served as editorial director of the Solutions Journalism Network, a nonprofit organization that advocates a solutions-based approach to reporting on social problems. Earlier in her career, she worked as assistant metro editor of the Chicago Tribune, managing editor of The Texas Observer, and senior writer at the MacArthur Foundation.

Richardson was a Nieman Fellow at Harvard University, a research fellow at the Bernard and Audre Rapoport Center for Human Rights and Justice at the University of Texas School of Law, and a Punch Sulzberger Executive Leadership Fellow at Columbia University in New York.

She holds a master's degree in public administration from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and a bachelor's degree in radio, television and film from the University of Texas at Austin.

Kristin Gilger, former interim dean, said the position reflects the school's commitment to social justice reporting and to providing diverse mentors and models to students.

**“For decades, Susan has worked tirelessly to bring attention to issues of justice and equality, which we are confident she will continue to do as the Ida B. Wells Professor of Journalism,”** Gilger said. “As a journalist and as the leader of news outlets, particularly in the nonprofit sector, she has had a deep impact on our industry, and we know she has much to teach the next generation of journalism leaders at Cronkite.” ■





**“In a world with increased interdependence among nations, culture and media transcend borders.”**

**— Juan Mundel**

Photo by Owen White

## New global director finds an ideal fit at Cronkite

Juan Mundel wasn't sure the perfect job existed for him.

Teaching, yes. Research, definitely. But he also wanted a position that tapped into his global interests and gave him the chance to run his own programs and build new ones from the ground up.

Mundel found that position at Cronkite. As the school's newest associate professor, Mundel directs the school's Global Initiatives program and is responsible for expanding Cronkite's presence abroad and increasing international opportunities for students and faculty.

Mundel replaces B. William Silcock, who managed global programs at Cronkite for more than a decade. Silcock retired at the end of 2020 after nearly 20 years at the school.

A native of Argentina, where he studied corporate communication at Blas Pascal University, Mundel came to the U.S. in 2008 for a year-long study abroad program at Muskingum University in New Concord, Ohio, and returned in 2010 for his master's degree in journalism and world languages at West Virginia University. He went on to

earn his Ph.D. in media and information studies from Michigan State University.

In 2017, he accepted a position as assistant professor of public relations and advertising at DePaul University in Chicago, where he also served as a College of Communication liaison to the university's Office of Global Initiatives for Latin America and as faculty director for the Latino and Media Communication program. He also developed and led study abroad programs, conferences and workshops.

“In a world with increased interdependence among nations, culture and media transcend borders,” Mundel said.

**“International programs are key for preparing students for a globalized world, and I'm thrilled to be leading that effort at the Cronkite School.”**

Silcock, who served on the search committee to find his successor, said Mundel “brings a different perspective and deep passion to Cronkite Global Initiatives. His personal touch with the students, staff and faculty ensures that Cronkite Global will continue to reach-and-teach one student at a time so all can feel included in

this important work.”

Mundel will teach a course in social media campaigns and engagement and plans to develop a new course in international media and working with multicultural audiences.

He also will continue his research, which focuses on the unintended effects of media exposure, particularly in advertising and social media. To gain insight into how consumers process mediated messages, he uses biometric indicators, such as heart rate and visual attention, to explain how individuals select, attend to and react to different content.

Mundel has received numerous awards, including the Chicago Scholars' 35 Under 35 Young Leaders Making an Impact in Chicago; an AEJMC's Minorities in Communication Division Poindexter Grant; and an Excellence in Teaching citation at Michigan State University.

In 2021, he was chosen as the recipient of the AEJMC Advertising Division's Early Career Teaching Excellence Award in recognition of his innovative pedagogy and initiatives to ensure student success. ■

## Business journalist with international expertise heads Reynolds Center

A few months after getting his bachelor's degree from Colgate University in New York, Jeffrey Timmermans headed to Japan to teach junior high school English. He had written his undergraduate honors thesis about the literary world of Meiji-era Japan, and he wanted to experience the country for himself.

For the next three decades, Timmermans stayed in Asia, working as a journalist and educator, until recently accepting a position as the Reynolds Chair in Business Journalism at the Cronkite School.

In his new role, Timmermans will direct Cronkite's Donald W. Reynolds National Center for Business Journalism, which works with journalists around the world to improve the quality of coverage of business and the economy as well as teach business journalism courses.

"I've been using Reynolds Center's materials in my teaching for years, so it's a tremendous honor to take on this new role," Timmermans said. "Business and financial news impacts all of us, and business journalists today face a daunting task in helping readers and viewers make sense of it all. The Reynolds Center will continue to be at the forefront of that effort — globally."

Most recently, Timmermans was associate professor of practice and director of the undergraduate journalism program at the University of Hong Kong, where he taught economics and business and financial journalism courses to graduate and undergraduate students.

For many years, he worked as a business journalist in Tokyo and Hong Kong. He served as the Tokyo correspondent for The Wall Street Journal, correspondent for the AP-Dow Jones News Service in Tokyo, and correspondent for the International Financing Review in Hong Kong. He also served as senior correspondent and Hong Kong bureau chief for Dow Jones Newswires.

In 2000, Dow Jones Newswires/The Wall



Photo by Alex Gould

Street Journal named Timmermans news editor with responsibility for overseeing equities coverage for the Asia-Pacific region. He was subsequently named managing editor, holding that position until he left in 2007 to become associate director for public relations at Bain & Company, one of the world's top business consulting firms, where he was responsible for leading and implementing the company's public relations strategy in Asia.

Timmermans began his journalism career in 1991 as deputy editor of The Gunma Commerce Journal in Japan, where he helped produce the monthly Japanese-language newspaper and was the first non-Japanese employee to work at the publication.

"Jeffrey brings to the Reynolds Center deep expertise in business journalism, international experience and an understanding of what business journalists need to do their jobs well," said former Interim Dean Kristin Gilger. "On top of all that, he brings a real passion for teaching the next generation of business journalists."

The Reynolds Center has provided training to tens of thousands of journalists and educators since it was established in 2003 by former CNBC television anchor and reporter Andrew Leckey at the American Press Institute in Virginia. It was moved to the Cronkite School three years

**"Business and financial news impacts all of us."**

**— Jeffrey Timmermans**

later with permanent funding from the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation.

Timmermans said his goals as director are to develop strategies to advance business journalism in the digital age, build partnerships across the university and industry, and expand training programs for business journalists domestically and abroad.

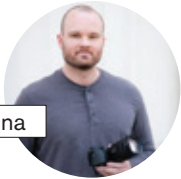
He also will oversee the national Barlett & Steele Awards for Investigative Business Journalism, which recognize the best business reporting each year, place Cronkite students in business journalism internships, and teach in the school's specialization for students interested in pursuing business journalism careers.

Timmermans earned his Ph.D. from the University of Hong Kong in 2016. He also holds a master's degree in journalism from Columbia University, New York, and a bachelor's degree from Colgate University, also in New York. ■



## “Dr. Bill” retires after 20 years at Cronkite

By Franco LaTona



LaTona

It's hour 10 of a 16-hour flight that will eventually land in Abu Dhabi. Jason Manning, a Cronkite professor of practice, awakes from a restless sleep.

The plane is dark, and everyone on board is either sleeping or mesmerized by their smartphones. Manning heads to the back of the plane and, as he approaches, he hears voices and laughter coming from the galley. He looks up, and there's Assistant Dean B. William Silcock, looking fresh and dapper in a suit and tie, hanging out and eating snacks with the flight crew.

“Jason, come meet my friends!” Silcock says. “Do you need a snack or a soda?”

Manning is standing there, trying to figure out if this is a dream, when a crew member hands him a banana and a ginger ale.

“That's when I realized Silcock knows how to do life,” Manning said.

After nearly 20 years at the Cronkite School, Silcock — or Dr. Bill, as he is better known — retired at the end of 2020, leaving a legacy of accomplishment that includes developing study abroad programs, cultivating grants that expanded the school's footprint abroad, and training journalists from around the world. He also helped lead the school as assistant dean for research and global programs. And for more than a decade, Silcock served as curator of the country's only Hubert H. Humphrey Fulbright Fellowship program dedicated to training journalists from emerging democracies.

Tran Thi Thu Ha, a Humphrey Fellow during the 2019-2020 academic year, remembers the sailboat brooch Silcock gave her before she returned home to Vietnam. She said the captain and boat are emblematic of Silcock's philosophy that the world is a wide place worth experiencing.

“I'm a firm believer that every voice needs to be heard, celebrated and listened to,” Silcock said.



Silcock has had his eyes set on the world since his childhood in Alaska. He used to accompany his mother to the Anchorage airport to pick up his father from trips, and he was fascinated by the planes that stopped there for refueling from all over the world.

“I just got really excited and started thinking about international travel,” he said.

He got his first chance in the 1990s, when he did two stints as a Fulbright Scholar — one in Ireland and one in Sweden.

“Those experiences changed my life,” he said. “I fell in love with this concept of the global newsroom and how the newsroom is a culture in and of itself.”

After disc jockeying for an Anchorage radio station, where he was known as “William on the Wireless,” Silcock headed to Brigham Young University in Utah, where he earned bachelor's and master's degrees and worked as news director for the campus television and radio stations. He spent five years in local TV news in South Carolina, Idaho and Salt Lake City before moving to Missouri to pursue his doctoral degree in global journalism. In 2001, degree in hand, he joined the Cronkite School as an associate professor.

Susan Keith, now a journalism professor at Rutgers University, New Jersey, was hired at about the same time. She would arrive at school early to beat rush hour traffic, but not before Silcock, who usually was already in his office blasting U2's “It's a Beautiful Day.”

“I would go, ‘Oh, Bill's here, and he's in a good mood,’” Keith said. “He was rarely in a bad mood.”

Longtime friend Kenneth Fischer, who teaches at the University of Oklahoma, described Silcock as an enthusiastic over-achiever — the kind of guy who will come up with 20 ideas when one is required.



B. William Silcock chats with Walter Cronkite during one of Cronkite's many visits to the school.



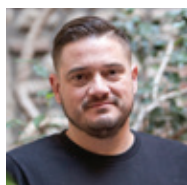
Silcock led many study abroad trips, including this one to the Mideast in 2016.

But perhaps nobody captures Silcock better than former Interim Dean Kristin Gilger, who remembers meeting him in 2001, shortly after he arrived at Cronkite. “I knew three things about him,” she said. “He was an accomplished broadcaster, students loved him and he was perhaps the nicest person I had ever met. All of those things remain just as true today.”

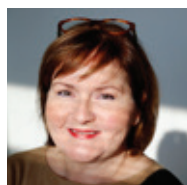
Silcock, who prefers to say he's “rewiring” rather than retiring, has been named an Emeritus faculty member at ASU. He plans to work on some research and writing projects and conduct workshops, hopefully in some part of the world he has never visited before. ■

The **Angela and Bill William Silcock Global Experience Fund** supports Cronkite students in their pursuit of global learning experiences. Visit [asufoundation.org/silcockfund](https://asufoundation.org/silcockfund) to make your gift, or contact Lindsay Walker, director of development at [lindsay.d.walker@asu.edu](mailto:lindsay.d.walker@asu.edu) or 602-496-5052.

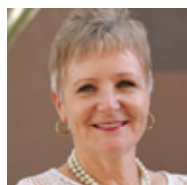
## Faculty News and Notes



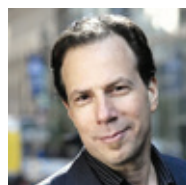
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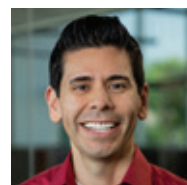
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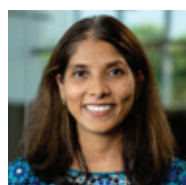
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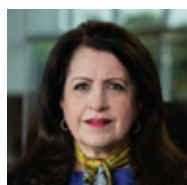
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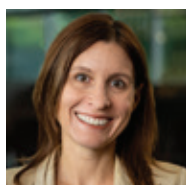
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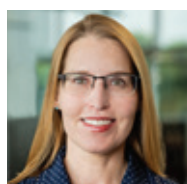
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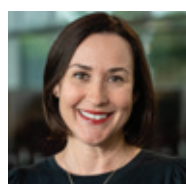
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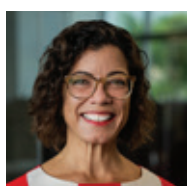
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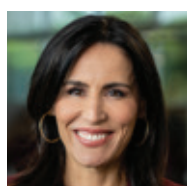
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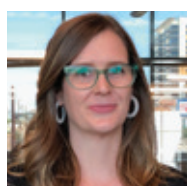
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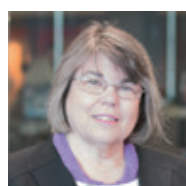
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Louise Solheim Professor **Marianne Barrett** served on search committees for ASU's executive vice president and provost and the Cronkite dean position and chaired a search for Cronkite's director of Global Initiatives.

**Maud Beelman**, executive editor of the Howard Center for Investigative Journalism, developed a new undergraduate curriculum on the principles of investigative journalism and augmented the research, reporting and data analysis elements of the center's master's program. In December, she and colleague **Lauren Mucciolo** published the fourth national Howard Center investigation of 2020 — three of which were produced in a virtual newsroom environment. In addition, she helped develop and now co-manages a new national fellowship program for graduates of the Howard Centers at ASU and the University of Maryland.

As director of ASU's Narrative Storytelling Initiative, **Steven Beschloss**, a professor of practice at Cronkite, co-produced seven episodes of the "Planet Forward/Peril and Promise" climate series for PBS' WNET in New York; edited and published more than 20 narrative essays for Transformations, a publishing channel of the L.A. Review of Books; provided editorial guidance for three new books, including Ayanna Thompson's "Blackface;" led five writing workshops; and co-directed "Confronting Authoritarianism," a faculty-driven project with ASU's The Melikian Center and the Center for the Study of Religion and Conflict.

Professor of Practice **Luis Bonilla** led the Digital Audiences Lab to its first-ever Gold award in the MarCom Awards for a digital campaign to draw attention to fiction stories developed by Future Tense. The lab also earned honors in the EDM Awards for digital campaigns developed for ASU's Future Tense platform as well as Global Sports Matters and Zócalo Public Square.

Associate Professor **Sharon Bramlett-Solomon** received the 2021 Dorothy Bowles Public Service Award, which recognizes AEJMC members who have worked for 10 years or longer to bridge the academy and the profession. She also was part of a panel at the AEJMC Southeast

Colloquium: "MAC: The voice in AEJMC for racial and ethnic diversity," and she was a panelist at the American Bar Association Conference, where she participated in a plenary session on the media's role in covering protest and controversy with a paper, "Black Protests, Evolving Media and Social Change."

Professor of Practice and documentarian **Peter Byck** launched a new documentary project, "Roots So Deep," about farmers and scientists participating in a large research project on soil health, soil regeneration and adaptive cattle grazing.

**Michael Casavantes** was promoted from lecturer to senior lecturer in recognition of his teaching and service to the school. He has been with the Cronkite School since 1990, teaching broadcast reporting, writing and producing as well as the history of communications and other courses.

Associate Professor **Monica Chadha** co-authored an article for "Communication Law and Policy" titled "Journalist, Advertiser or Both: Reevaluating Legal Distinctions Between Journalistic and Commercial Speech in the Networked Era." She presented, along with Associate Professor **K. Hazel Kwon**, Cronkite alumna Kirstin Pellizzaro, and Ph.D. student Chun Shao, a paper, "Misinformation and the Pandemic: An Evaluation of Rumors from the Psychological Distance Perspective" at the 2021 International Communication Association annual conference.

Professor **Stephen K. Doig** planned to spend fall 2020 abroad for what would have been his third Fulbright Scholar Program professorship, but the pandemic interfered with those plans. It didn't interfere, however, with his induction into the Dartmouth College chapter of Phi Beta Kappa in recognition of outstanding career achievements. Doig gave an inaugural address for the new data journalism program at Jindal Global University of India and joined the program's international advisory board. Closer to home, he held a 90-minute Zoom workshop for Gannett investigative reporters on spycraft techniques for protecting the identities of confidential sources.

Weil Family Professor of Journalism **Leonard Downie Jr.'s** seventh book, a

journalism memoir, "All About the Story: Power, Politics and The Washington Post," was published in fall 2020. He participated in several dozen virtual events for book dealers, book parties, university student and faculty groups, and book clubs around the country. Excerpts and articles based on the book were published in The Washington Post, The Philadelphia Inquirer and The Boston Globe. Downie also served as the chair of the national/international investigative reporting judges for the annual Scripps Howard Foundation journalism awards.

**Heather Dunn**, managing editor of Cronkite News, served as the Broadcast Education Association's Division Weather Awards coordinator for the fourth year. She also serves on the Society of Professional Journalists' Awards Committee and is the faculty adviser for Cronkite's SPJ/ONA chapter.

Associate Professor **Dawn Gilpin** was promoted to assistant dean for research, with responsibility for supporting research by faculty and students. She also oversees the school's doctoral program and facilitates interdisciplinary collaborations. With Cronkite doctoral student Rian Bosse, she presented "Colonizing the Pandemic" at the 2020 Global Fusion conference. The paper was based on an international study they conducted with funding from a Cronkite Dean's Grant. The two also co-authored a chapter using the same data for an edited volume on COVID-19 and emergent geographies to be published by Springer. In spring 2021, Gilpin co-taught the inaugural Interdisciplinary Solutions for Social Impact lab course on inequities in health and wellness under the auspices of the Graduate College, along with faculty from nursing and community development.

Reynolds Professor in Business Journalism and former Interim Dean **Kristin Gilger** moderated a virtual discussion on how the news media cover disability for the Zero Project, an initiative based in Vienna that focuses on access for people with disabilities. Those in attendance represented countries across the globe.

## ONA grant leads to pilot project in immersive media

By Dzevida Sadikovic



Sadikovic

Every semester, Retha Hill's students learn an entirely new way of telling stories using immersive technologies, such as virtual reality, augmented reality, photogrammetry and 360-video.

Now she's helping other journalism faculty around the country learn to do the same for their students.

Hill, who directs the school's New Media Innovation and Entrepreneurship Lab, won a grant from the Online News Association to help Black female professors learn the uses of immersive technology in journalism.

This year, she launched a pilot project, "Expanding the Circle: Black Women in XR," for six female journalism educators from various universities who are fellow members of the National Association of Black Journalists. Together, the women are learning about immersive media and figuring out ways to incorporate them into their journalism instruction.

"In terms of people who are doing advanced work with immersive media and who are of color, there are not that many of us," she said. Part of the challenge is keeping up with rapidly changing technology — and finding the time and support to learn it.

Hill meets with the women in the pilot program every Sunday for a couple of hours on Zoom and then confers with them

individually or in small groups during the week. She hopes the group will be able to gather in person for a week-long, hands-on training session before long.

Hill has been a pioneer in digital innovation since 1995 when she was a reporter at The Washington Post and decided to take the leap to Digital Ink, the Post's web presence, which eventually became [washingtonpost.com](https://www.washingtonpost.com).

Ever since, she has been exploring new technologies, and she's convinced others need to do the same. There's a revolution going on in the way news and information is being delivered, she said, and students and faculty, especially women and professors of color, should not be left behind.

The women are starting out with small-scale projects, such as creating avatars, so they can get a feel for various technologies and see how they might be applied to the classroom. "I hope they see how amazing it can be to do even small projects," she said.

In the innovation lab that she leads, Hill tells students they'll be much more competitive in the job market if they aren't afraid of technology. In addition to virtual reality and augmented reality projects, her students build news games, which require them to learn how to code and use the C Sharp programming language. They have created games that put people into interac-



Photo by Camaron Stevenson

**"A lot of young people use and understand social media, but not as many are working on advanced storytelling methods that are really the future of journalism."**

**— Retha Hill**

tive simulations designed to help them understand important news topics such as homelessness, the election process, the opioid crisis and evacuations during natural disasters.

"A lot of young people use and understand social media," she said, "but not as many are working on advanced storytelling methods that are really the future of journalism." ■

*The group's interactives can be seen here:*



Cronkite writer-in-residence **Terry Greene Sterling's** new book, co-written with Arizona journalist Jude Joffe-Block, "Driving While Brown: Sheriff Joe Arpaio versus the Latino Resistance," was released by the University of California Press in spring 2021. The book tells the stories of a powerful Arizona sheriff and the Latino resistance that rose up against him. Greene Sterling also co-taught a new course, "Reporting in Indigenous Communities" with Indian Country Today Editor Mark Trahan. The class was taught via a partnership between the Cronkite School and Alaska Pacific University in Anchorage.

Assistant Professor **Ali Hussain** co-authored two articles in the Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs: a "COVID-19 and Social-Politics of Medical Misinformation on Social Media in Pakistan" with Muhammad Ittefaq and Maryam Fatima, and "Heartbreaking vs. Heartwarming Facebook Advertisements by Nonprofits to Help the Rohingya Refugees" with Helen Wieffering. He also presented research conducted with three different Cronkite graduate students at the Conference on the Society of Personality and Social Psychology.

Associate Professor **K. Hazel Kwon** was named associate editor of the Journal

of Communication. She also served as an editor of a special issue on the dark social web published in American Behavioral Scientist. Kwon also published work in the Journal of Information Technology & Politics, IEEE Internet Computing (cyber-rumors regarding the Zika virus), and American Behavioral Scientist (COVID-19 rumors in the Chinese digital space).

**Andrés Martinez** hosted Asi Las Cosas, one of Mexico's most influential morning radio news programs, at the ASU Washington Center the week of the 2020 U.S. presidential election, and he analyzed the election results in a column for Mexico's Reforma newspaper as well as



on TV newscasts. In spring 2021, Martinez co-taught Sport & Globalization, a new course he developed with sports historian Victoria Jackson that was cross-listed across Cronkite, the School of Historical, Religious, and Philosophical Studies, and the Thunderbird School of Global Management.

Associate Professor **Fran Matera** created and launched a new online course in Strategic PR: Crisis Communications, featuring original content from 12 practitioners. She also worked with Fulbright Senior Scholar Laura Irimies from Babes-Bolyai University in Romania to develop its PR Lab and practitioner panels, and she helped develop an online workshop content for the Saudi Journalists Association in concert with Cronkite Global Initiatives.

Lecturer **Elizabeth Mays** was a co-presenter of "Creating and adopting open educational resources in entrepreneurship and innovation" at the 2020 Open Education Conference. She also presented at the spring 2021 ASU Online Faculty Showcase for Excellence in Online Teaching.

**Lauren Mucciolo**, executive producer for the Howard Center for Investigative Journalism, worked on four films that premiered in late 2020 for PBS Frontline, BBC One Panorama, Channel 4 in the UK, and Apple TV+. With Howard Center colleague **Maud Beelman**, she helped produce Howard Center projects that have been recognized with 12 industry awards — from EPPYs to the BEA Media Festival and IRE — including eight first-place awards. She also served on a panel on solitary confinement for Southwestern Law School and moderated a "Must See Mondays" presentation on investigative journalism that matters, interviewing Visiting Professor **Fernando Diaz**.

Oxford University Press published the first book by Assistant Professor **Jacob Nelson**, "Imagined Audiences: How Journalists Perceive and Pursue the Public." He also authored an article in *New Media & Society* with University of Oregon professor Seth Lewis, "Only 'Sheep' Trust Journalists? How Citizens' Self-perceptions Shape their Approach to News." Three of his public-facing pieces about journalists and their audiences appeared in *Slate*, *The Conversation*, and *Columbia Journalism Review*.

Global Initiatives Director and Associate

Professor **Juan Mundel** received the 2021 Early Career Teaching Excellence Award from the AEJMC Advertising Division. The award recognizes exceptional classroom teaching for faculty in the first few years after completing their graduate degree. Mundel also will head the AEJMC Advertising Division for the 2021-2022 term.

Assistant Professor **Sada Reed** and undergraduate Kiara Quaranta were awarded \$1,000 from Barrett, The Honors College for web scraping and coding work for Quaranta's honor's thesis project on perceptions of race and identity in Italy through the lens of Italian media coverage of Afro-Italian soccer players. Reed's essay summarizing her study of news coverage of World Trade Center cough syndrome during the COVID-19 pandemic was accepted into Journalism History's 9/11 20th anniversary commemorative series.

The News Co/Lab team of **Kristy Roschke**, **Dan Gillmor** and **Celeste Sepessy** launched their free online media literacy course "Mediactive: How to Participate in our Digital World" in fall 2020. More than 3,500 people have enrolled in the course. In conjunction with Arizona PBS, the News Co/Lab produced the 30-minute show "Break! In case of emergency: A media survival guide for 2020" and a series of related digital shorts. The team also is developing new courses for the online Digital Media Literacy BA, which launches in fall 2021. The News Co/Lab was awarded a grant from American Press Institute's Trusted Elections Network to develop "infomemes" to debunk common election-related misinformation in partnership with Spaceship Media. Roschke and Gillmor also are working with an interdisciplinary group of ASU researchers on the Semafor disinformation detection project for the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency.

Professor **Joseph Russomanno** published an edited volume with Lexington Books, "Speech Freedom on Campus: Past, Present and Future," for which he also wrote the introduction and one of the 10 chapters. With his mentee, Ayesha Ashfaq of University of the Punjab in Pakistan, he co-authored a chapter for an edited volume on COVID-19 and geography to be published by Springer. For *Communication Law & Policy*, he wrote "Kalven Jr., Harry. The New York Times Case: A Note on 'the

Central Meaning of the First Amendment,' 1964 Sup. Ct. Rev. 191." Non-academic writings include "How Buffy's 'Hush' speaks to censorship" for *Slate/Future Tense* and "The best class I ever led" for *Transformations*.

Southwest Borderlands Initiative Professor **Fernanda Santos** delivered the opening keynote of the Power of Narrative conference at Boston University and joined the faculty of the Poynter Institute's Power of Diverse Voices seminar, a competitive program for writers of color seeking to improve their opinion writing skills. She published a feature on homelessness and another on COVID's impact in Los Angeles County in *The New York Times Magazine*. She officially joined *The Washington Post* as a contributing columnist.

Students in the Public Relations Lab, working under the direction of Director **Lisa Schmidtke**, were recognized as Gold Winners at the NYX Awards, in the Media Relations/Publicity and Content Marketing & Writing categories. The students worked with a mix of local and national clients, and the stories they wrote for these clients earned placements on the Pac-12 network website and in *USA Today*.

**Leslie-Jean Thornton**, along with co-author Susan Keith of Rutgers University, received the prestigious Janis Edwards Article of the Year Award from the National Communication Association's Visual Communication Division. The article, "Night and Day: A Visual Diptych of Hate and Horror in Charlottesville," employs visual textual analysis to examine two photographs from the August 2017 Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia. It was published in *Visual Communication Quarterly*. ■

## Cronkite Visiting Professional William C. Rhoden makes Sports Media Hall of Fame

By Mario Baralta

William C. Rhoden, a nationally acclaimed sports writer who teaches at the Cronkite School, has joined the top ranks of sports journalists as a member of the National Sports Media Association Hall of Fame.

Rhoden joined the Cronkite School in 2019 as a visiting professional and a visiting senior practitioner for the ASU Global Sports Institute.

He was inducted into the NSMA Hall of Fame this summer, alongside fellow sportswriters Larry Merchant, William Nack and Rick Telander as well as legendary sportscasters Bill King, Jim Nantz and Dick Stockton, in a record-breaking seven-man Hall of Fame Class of 2021.

"I am honored and humbled to be inducted into the Sports Media Hall of Fame," Rhoden said. "When I look at the other inductees — professionals I've worked with for years — the honor becomes even more special. This is indeed one of the highlights of my career."

Rhoden is a columnist and editor-at-large for ESPN's *The Undeclared*, which covers the intersection of sports, race and culture. He joined *The Undeclared* after a 34-year career at *The New York Times*, where he spent more than a decade writing the "Sports of the Times" column. Before joining the Times, he was a columnist for *The Baltimore Sun* and an editor at *Ebony* magazine.

Rhoden is the recipient of a prestigious Peabody Award for his writing for the HBO documentary "Journey of the African American Athlete." He also is the author of two acclaimed books: "The Rise, Fall and Redemption of the Black Athlete," and "Third and A Mile: The Trials and Triumphs of The Black Quarterback."

As a visiting professional at the Cronkite School, Rhoden teaches "Opinion in the Digital Age," introducing students to the art of crafting and forming thoughtful opinion pieces.

"William C. Rhoden is one of the finest



Photo by Joe Faraoni, ESPN Images

**"When I look at the other inductees — professionals I've worked with for years — the honor becomes even more special."**

**— William C. Rhoden**

sports journalists of our time," said Brett Kurland, director of sports programs at Cronkite. "He is a model for our students to go beyond the obvious, to find stories that matter, stories that make a difference." ■



Baralta

## Visiting faculty add depth to teaching of investigative reporting and visual journalism

By Lisa Diethelm

**Two experienced journalists joined the Cronkite faculty for the spring 2021 semester, bolstering the school's teaching in investigative reporting and visual journalism.**

Fernando Diaz, a veteran investigative journalist, and Juan Arredondo, a photographer and videographer with international experience, taught classes and coached students in professional programs.

Diaz, who served as the Edith Kinney Gaylord Visiting Professor in Investigative Reporting, co-taught an investigative reporting class designed to prepare students for work in the Howard Center for Investigative Journalism, one of the school's 13 professional programs. The position is funded by the Inasmuch Foundation, a journalism foundation based in Oklahoma City.

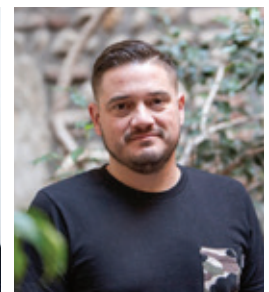
Arredondo was the school's first Visiting Professional in Visual Journalism. The position was created as part of a gift from the Howard G. Buffett Foundation to expand student experiences in visual storytelling.

Arredondo, a native of Colombia, has documented social movements, conflicts and other events in his native country and in the U.S. He won a 2018 World Press Photo award for a visual story on the reintegration of former guerrillas of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia through soccer. The following year, he studied as a Nieman Fellow at Harvard University, focusing on the impact of photography in post-conflict societies, and, in 2020, he was honored with the Overseas Press Club Scholar Award.

His work has been published in *The New York Times*, *National Geographic*, *Vanity Fair* and *ESPN Magazine*.



Fernando Diaz



Juan Arredondo

While at Cronkite, Arredondo taught an advanced photojournalism course and worked with student photographers in Cronkite News and the Carnegie-Knight News21 program.

Before coming to Cronkite, Diaz was the editor and publisher of *The Chicago Reporter*, an investigative publication focused on issues of race and poverty in that city. He also has worked at the *San Francisco Chronicle* and at *Hoy*, Chicago's daily Spanish-language newspaper. He has also led award-winning coverage at *Reveal* from The Center for Investigative Reporting.



# Nelson's book draws a line between sustainability and quality of news

By Dzevida Sadikovic

Journalists should try to connect with their audiences, but it won't always produce the results they anticipate.

That's one of the conclusions reached by Assistant Professor Jacob L. Nelson in his new book, "Imagined Audiences: How Journalists Perceive and Pursue the Public," published by Oxford University Press.

The book examines the relationship between journalists and their audiences in a digital media environment and explores how journalists' efforts to improve that relationship may or may not contribute to their success. To research the book, Nelson interviewed journalists about their perceptions of their audiences and drew on studies of audience analytics to show how news audiences actually behave.

Nelson got interested in the topic while covering a suburb of Chicago for Patch, a hyper-local news organization, and decided to make it the topic of his doctoral thesis at Northwestern University.

Nelson's findings suggest that the way journalists approach their audiences is changing. Historically, journalists saw themselves as the professionals who produced news and viewed audiences as the people who passively consumed it.

"Now, there is this expectation within journalism that journalists should be working more closely with and even alongside the people who they are trying to reach with their news," Nelson said.

However, he argues that journalists' ability to influence patterns of news consumption is more limited than they might think. Drawing on audience research, he suggests that structural factors — such as social media platforms, the amount of time

**"I try to impress upon my students that all anyone knows for sure is that the old way of doing things isn't working."**

— Jacob L. Nelson

people devote to news, the languages they speak, and the places where they live — play a significant role in what they read, watch and listen to.

"Interest in the news is only one variable that shapes news audience behavior," he said.

Nelson also makes the case that the quality of the journalism is not a guarantee of economic success.

Making news more trustworthy, engaging and reflective of the audience improves the quality, he said, "but the quality of journalism and sustainability are two different problems."

Sustainability is more tied to structures and systems that promote content that's already popular. For that reason, big, familiar news brands like The New York Times and The Washington Post have continued to grow, while smaller outlets have suffered, he said.

In order to change this winner-take-all media environment, Nelson suggests that journalism's stakeholders need to equalize



Photo by Charlie Leight



the playing field so smaller outlets have a greater chance to succeed financially. Without changing these larger, structural conditions, better news might not necessarily lead to larger, more loyal audiences, he said.

"Journalism is in such an ongoing struggle," he said, "and I hope this book offers clarity to the conversation about what those problems are so that we hopefully work more constructively to find solutions that might work."

Those are the kinds of issues Nelson raises with his students in the classes he teaches, one of which is the Business and Future of Journalism.

"I try to impress upon my students that all anyone knows for sure is that the old way of doing things isn't working," he said. "I present my students with some of the ideas out there for what will make journalism better, but ultimately my hope is that they realize it's up to them to decide what they think will actually work." ■



Sadikovic



Diethelm

He is the recipient of two Emmy awards and several Edward R. Murrow Awards for reporting, videography and documentary work.

Diaz and co-instructor Lauren Mucciolo, executive producer for the Howard Center, focused on teaching students investigative basics, such as how to file successful public records requests, source stories and organize their materials. Students produced mid-range investigative stories, the best of which were published in professional

news outlets.

"I like to bring a sort of practical approach to investigative reporting," Diaz said. "I want students to think about how to identify and execute topical investigations."

Arredondo pushed students to find stories they care about and explore new avenues of storytelling, such as photography and audio.

He described himself as being "energized by students." "I just want to

be amazed by what the students can come up with," he said.

"I just want to be a resource for them, too, for whatever they need or whatever knowledge I can share to make their stories better." ■

## Downie's latest book tells the story of journalism

By Franco LaTona

Leonard Downie Jr.'s journalism career began in the fifth grade at Landon Elementary in Cleveland, Ohio. That's when he wrote his first story for the school paper about what it was like for students to switch rooms each semester. By grade six, he was the paper's editor-in-chief.

His childhood passion turned into a storied 44-year career at The Washington Post, a career that is captured in Downie's latest book "All About the Story: News, Power, Politics and The Washington Post," released by Public Affairs publishing in 2020.

Downie relates his own story as well as the story of journalism during a peak period for the nation's news media and at a time when The Washington Post was rising to prominence.

He started at the Post as an intern and ended up spending the next 44 years at the newspaper as an investigative reporter, editor on the local and national news staffs, London correspondent, and, from 1984 to 1991, managing editor under then-executive editor Ben Bradlee. As deputy metro editor from 1972 to 1974, he helped supervise the Post's Watergate coverage, which led to the resignation of President Richard M. Nixon. He also oversaw the newspaper's coverage of every national election from 1984 through 2008.

In 1991, he was named executive editor, the highest position in the newsroom. During his 17 years as executive editor, The Washington Post won 25 Pulitzer prizes,



**"I thought I had an even higher responsibility to remain nonpartisan."**

**— Leonard Downie Jr.**

more than any other newspaper under a single executive editor.

Downie joined the Cronkite School in 2009 as the Weil Family Professor of Journalism to teach investigative journalism.

One of the lessons he teaches his students is the importance of objectivity in reporting — or nonpartisanship as Downie prefers to call it. In his book, he writes that when he took the job as The Washington Post's managing editor in 1984, he quit voting altogether, although he never required his reporters to follow suit.

"I thought I had an even higher responsibility to remain nonpartisan," he said.

He did, however, bar reporters from getting involved in partisan activities. He writes that in 1989 some of the Post's journalists participated in a "huge march for abortion rights" in Washington, D.C. Although he didn't discipline them, Downie writes that he reminded staff members of their duty to remain nonpartisan. It was the last time the policy was knowingly violated, he said.

"If you're reporting on demonstrations and also expressing opinions about demonstrations, that makes your reporting suspect," he said.

The Post was aggressive about reporting on public figures, even when it meant delving into their private lives. He notes in

his book that reporters turned a blind eye to the "compulsive sexual escapades" of presidents for more than the first half of the 20th century.

Starting with Gary Hart, a Democratic running for his party's nomination for the presidency, Downie and Bradlee assigned a reporter to conduct an "in-depth character profile" about Hart's extramarital affairs as well as "questions about his honesty."

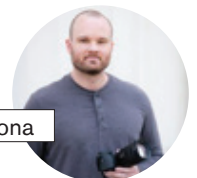
"The rules had changed," Downie writes of the Hart investigation. "Adultery would never again be off limits in the decisions about how to report on politicians."

Subsequent coverage of public figures such as Presidents George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton, as well as Washington, D.C., Mayor Marion Barry, led some to conclude that "the news media, led by The Washington Post, had gone way too far," Downie writes.

But Downie didn't waver, and the #MeToo movement in recent years "makes clear that what I did and The Washington Post did and other parts of the media did through the (Monica) Lewinsky case was absolutely the right thing to do," Downie said.

"All About the Story: News, Power, Politics and The Washington Post" is Downie's seventh book. It is available for purchase at bookstores and online retailers. ■

The **Pearl and Leonard Downie Scholarship** supports rising juniors and seniors interested in investigative reporting. Contribute to the next generation of investigative reporters by visiting [asufoundation.org/downiescholarship](https://asufoundation.org/downiescholarship), or contact Lindsay Walker, director of development at [lindsay.d.walker@asu.edu](mailto:lindsay.d.walker@asu.edu) or 602-496-5052.



LaTona



## First annual symposium spotlights Cronkite research

Academic research is usually a lonely pursuit.

Too lonely, according to Dawn Gilpin, Cronkite's assistant dean for research, especially for doctoral students who are learning to master the time-consuming and challenging process of gathering data, analyzing information, reading relevant literature and writing a dissertation.

Gilpin thought students might like the chance to "share their work with each other, be inspired by what their peers are working on and be prompted to consider new questions and approaches."

Plus, she said, "We all need to be reminded once in a while that we are part of a vibrant, engaged community of scholars trying to understand the role of journalism, media and communication in our society and the world."

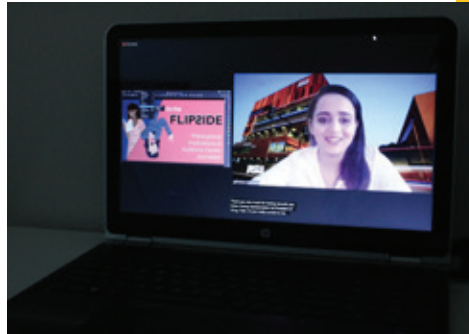
Thus was born the first Cronkite Research Symposium.

The inaugural symposium, which took place virtually early in 2021,

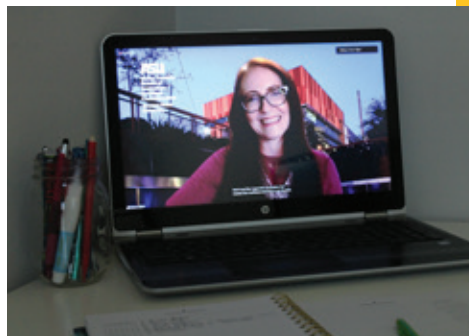
**brought together nearly two dozen students and faculty for a half-day of presentations and discussions about research in progress.**

Doctoral students, as well as several advanced undergraduate students, first submitted their papers to a faculty committee for review. Students whose submissions were accepted were invited to present their work at the symposium, after which they discussed with faculty the theories underlying their research, their methodologies and the applicability of their findings to the profession.

Each research paper was blindly scored to assess the originality, rigor, contribution and quality of the writing, and the final scores determined the top paper award — as well as a cash prize of \$500. The 2021 award went to doctoral student **Nisha Sridharan** for her paper, "On the Flip Side: Philosophical Implications of Audience-Centric Journalism," which explored



Nisha Sridharan talks about her paper, "On the Flip Side: Philosophical Implications of Audience-Centric Journalism." Photo by Carmen Da Alba Cardenas



Dawn Gilpin. Photo by Carmen Da Alba Cardenas

the deeper theoretical implications of what is often referred to as "engaged journalism."

In addition, doctoral student **Rian Bosse** received a certificate for submitting the top abstract.

Gilpin said the symposium will become an annual event at the Cronkite School, giving doctoral students, in particular, an opportunity to practice their presentation skills, gain experience with the peer review process, and receive feedback on their work before submitting it to conferences or journals.

Moreover, she said, the annual gathering will be an occasion for "everyone to learn what their peers and students have been working on and showcase — and celebrate — research within the Cronkite community." ■



Rian Bosse talks about his research during the virtual symposium. Photo by Carmen Da Alba Cardenas

## Doctoral students share research

Cronkite doctoral students pursue a range of research topics that advance key issues in journalism, from the spread of rumors on social media during the pandemic to the experience of women in the world of gaming. Here's a sampling:

Recent doctoral graduate **Allison Forbes'** dissertation, "Ball is (Virtual) Life: An Ethnographic Examination of Identity, Culture and Community in NBA 2K," explored the world of gaming. She studied how fandom, family ties and racial and gender tourism affect the way people play the annual basketball simulation game series.

Ph.D. students **Nisha Sridharan** and **Rian Bosse** collaborated on a paper, "Beyond the Border: Latino Journalists' Experience Covering Border and Immigration Issues during the Pandemic and 2020 Election," which they presented at a conference of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

Ph.D. student **Ahmad Al-Mulla** presented his paper, "Following Celebrities on Social Networking Sites," at a gathering of the International Communication Association.

Ph.D. student **Chun Sha** collaborated with Associate Professors Hazel Kwon and Monica Chadha and Cronkite alumna Kirstin Pellizzaro on a research project, "Misinformation and the Pandemic: An Evaluation of Rumors from the Psychological Distance Perspective." ■

## Documentary series draws attention to sustainable agricultural practices

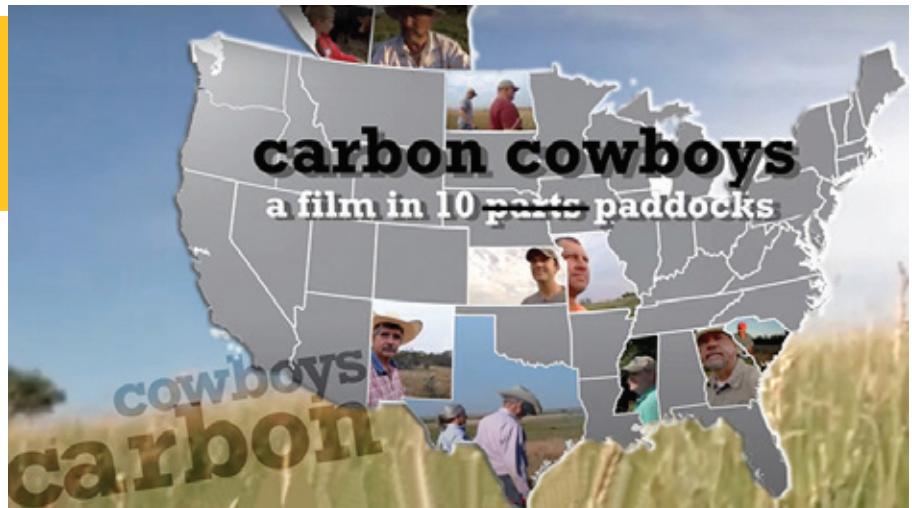
Peter Byck spends a lot of time traipsing through fields, dodging cow pies and talking to farmers.

A documentarian, his specialty is creating films with a message — that innovative farming techniques can help mitigate climate change, avoid disruptions in food supplies, preserve the land for future generations and provide healthy food options for consumers.

Byck, who has a joint appointment in the Cronkite School and the School of Sustainability, recently released a new 10-part documentary series consisting of short films 8 to 23 minutes in length.

**The series, “Carbon Cowboys,” was shot over six years in rural communities in the U.S., Canada and the United Kingdom and features farmers who are using regenerative grazing techniques to produce more food from less land.**

Adaptive multi-paddock (AMP) grazing involves quickly rotating cattle from pasture to pasture before they can damage the



land or overgraze the grass — similar to how bison herds once moved across The Great Plains. The practice, which does not use chemical fertilizers or pesticides, builds soils that are richer in carbon, which, in turn, boosts crop and livestock yields. It also makes the land better equipped to cope with drought and reduces flooding.

Perhaps surprisingly, farmers who have employed these techniques seem to have avoided the worst economic effects brought on by the coronavirus pandemic.

The farmers in the film series who sell directly to consumers reported sales in 2020 between 3 and 10 times higher than the previous year. Other farmers, meanwhile, were dealing with disruptions in the centralized industrial beef supply chain.

At the same time, Byck said, “People are getting more concerned about their health; they’re thinking more about where they get their food from, especially their meat.”

Tim Hoven of Hoven Farms in Alberta,

Canada, said, “We are now sold out months in advance. This COVID crisis has made people who have been on the fence for a long time make a purchase. They’re saying, ‘I have always wanted to place an order’ and finally decided to order now.”

The films show farmers working with nature, rather than against it, Byck said. “You see them caring for their animals and for their land. You see farmers making more money, and creating an alternative to industrial farming.”

AMP grazing also has been shown by scientists to address climate change by greatly increasing the amount of forage farmers can grow and, via photosynthesis, increasing the carbon those plants can draw out of the air (as carbon dioxide) and store it in the soil (as carbon). There are 3.5 billion hectares of grazing land on earth, Byck said. If farmers and ranchers could draw down a ton of carbon in every hectare, they could draw down about one-third of all human CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. ■



Photo by Ben Daughtrey, Carbon Nation

Byck is the founder and president of **Carbon Nation**, an environmental film nonprofit that made the award-winning film “Carbon Nation,” released in 2011. He is currently helping lead a \$8.5 million research project focused on adaptive multi-paddock grazing — a collaboration with 20 scientists and 10 farms, focused on soil health/soil carbon storage, microbial/bug/bird biodiversity, water cycling and more. For more information on the “Carbon Cowboys” project, see [carboncowboys.org](https://carboncowboys.org)





Photos courtesy of the  
Hogan family

## Outstanding Faculty Associate Award honors memory of Shanna Hogan

Every semester, students in Shanna Hogan's beginning newswriting and reporting class were in for a surprise: The person who would be teaching them how to cover crime and cops was the author of true crime books.

After graduating from the Cronkite School in 2005, Hogan worked as a newspaper reporter and editor before taking up true-crime writing. She wrote four such books, including "Picture Perfect: The Jodi Arias Story" about a sensational Arizona crime case, which became a New York Times best-seller. She also co-hosted the first series of the true-crime podcast "Case Closed" from Macmillan Books, featuring the case of murder victim Erin Corwin.

For five years, between writing projects, Hogan taught beginning journalism students as a part-time faculty member. She was legendary for dressing up as characters for her students to interview — a way for them to practice conducting interviews before being sent out to do the real thing. To teach them about crime reporting, she would show up to class dressed like a mob boss in a striped suit, fedora and pencil moustache and host a press conference.

Students loved it, and they loved Hogan, who was, as one student put it, **"over the top for everything, including being there for her students."**

Hogan, 38, died in the summer of 2020 after an accident at her home, leaving behind her husband, Matt, and her young son, Zander.

The Cronkite School awarded Hogan the 2020 Outstanding Faculty Associate Award in recognition of the lasting contributions she made to the school and her

students. The award is given each year to a part-time faculty member.

Kristin Gilger, former interim dean of the Cronkite School, remembers Hogan as a student reporter for The State Press, ASU's student newspaper, which Gilger advised.

"Even then, you could see how much promise she had," Gilger said. "She would find stories no one else had thought of, and she wrote beautifully."

Students said they'll remember Hogan as **a fun teacher who pushed them to get better.**

"She wanted to give all she could to her students," one former student said. "I'd been around journalism enough that I had the basics down, and she was the first professor who challenged me to go further than that."

**Said another, "She honestly believed in me more than I believed in myself."**

She was, as Gilger put it, **"a giver."**

**At the end of each semester, she would give every student a reporter's notebook with a detailed, personal message. She would stay in touch with them and check up on them to see what they were doing and offer advice. Even in death, she was a giver. Her heart, kidney and liver are among her organs that went to other people."** ■

### Previous outstanding faculty associates

**2018-2019**

Al Macias

**2017-2018**

Maureen West

**2015-2016**

Tom Fergus

**2014-2015**

Greg Boeck

**2013-2014**

Elvia Diaz

**2012-2013**

Allysa Adams

**2011-2012**

Gilbert Zermeño

**2010-2011**

Tom Blodgett

**2009-2010**

Richard Ruelas

**2008-2009**

Jennifer Johnson

and Andrea Decker

**2007-2008**

Wilma Mathews

**2006-2007**

Norm Ginsburg

## ESPN's Matt Barrie inducted into Cronkite Alumni Hall of Fame

*This article is adapted with permission from ASU News, where it was originally published Dec. 30, 2019.*

**In less than two decades, Matt Barrie went from a Cronkite student to ESPN SportsCenter anchor and studio host for the network's college football coverage.**

But what he prizes the most is the fun he's had along the way.

"We watch sports to be entertained," Barrie said. "There's no reason not to have fun. I tell students this all the time, 'Take your job seriously but don't take yourself seriously.' That'll go a long way in life."

The Scottsdale native is the newest member of the Cronkite Alumni Hall of Fame, joining Pulitzer Prize-winning Los Angeles Times reporter Julie Cart, CNN International's Becky Anderson, Arizona Diamondbacks President Derrick Hall and ABC's Al Michaels, among others.

Barrie started his career at WJFW-TV in Wausau, Wisconsin, covering the Green Bay Packers and Wisconsin Badgers. He went on to Lawton, Oklahoma, as a sports host and reporter for KSWO-TV, where he reported live on Big 12 championship and BCS National championship games.

At his next job in Columbia, South Carolina, he suffered a setback when he contracted Bell's palsy, which paralyzed the left side of his face. His left eye was frozen and he wore an eyepatch, forcing him to step away from the camera.

"It changes your outlook," he said.



Matt Barrie on the set of the ESPN College Football Halftime Report. Photo by Melissa Rawlins, ESPN Images

"I was 25 or 26 at the time. I think at that point in life when you get hit with something, you really start to understand what's important. But you also understand what's not important."

Barrie recovered a few months later and moved to Dallas, where he was anchor and reporter for KXAS-NBC 5 and hosted a weekend sportscast. In 2013, he auditioned at ESPN. He said he didn't realize what the job would mean until he ran into NFL Hall of Fame receiver Jerry Rice in the bathroom.

"You start thinking, 'Oh. It's going to be that kind of place,'" Barrie said. "It's a place where you're going to be around a lot of Hall of Famers and a lot of athletes you grew up idolizing that now know you as one of them."

At ESPN Barrie frequently hosts "SportsCenter on the Road" in cities across

the U.S., including college campuses during football season and the Masters Tournament. In 2019, he was named studio host for college football Saturdays, and he calls some college football games on ESPN networks.

In addition to his work on golf for "SportsCenter," he co-hosts the ESPN golf podcast "Matty and the Caddie" with ESPN.com's Michael Collins.

Even though his career has moved at a fast clip, Barrie said patience is the most important attribute a reporter can possess.

"It's not going to happen overnight," he said. "I've been guilty numerous times in my small market jobs of wanting to quit because it wasn't happening quick enough."

**... Patience in this job is paramount, but if you have enough of it, you can eventually succeed."** ■

## Recent Cronkite grad returns to his native country to report for the Post

Bryan Pietsch, a 2019 Cronkite graduate, is back in South Korea for the first time since he was a baby — this time as a reporter for The Washington Post.

Pietsch joined two other reporters at the Post's recently launched Seoul Hub, where they cover breaking news as part of an effort to expand global coverage.

Pietsch, who was adopted as a baby and raised in Minnesota, said he's excited to be back in his native country, even though he

was too young when he left to remember it.

"I'm really happy to be in Korea since I was born here, so it's a great opportunity," he said. The Post is "just setting up this hub here in Asia, so it's really cool to be a part of something new — building it from the ground up."

After graduating, Pietsch reported for Business Insider in New York and Reuters in Washington, D.C., then took a position in Denver as a general assignment reporter for

The New York Times' Express Desk.

At ASU, he reported for The State Press and the Washington, D.C. bureau of Cronkite News, where he covered borderlands, money and just about any other story he could find, according to Steve Crane, director of the Washington bureau.

Crane said Pietsch was a fearless reporter who was especially adept at finding Arizona angles for his stories. "The guy's good," he said. "He's not afraid to





**“Whatever we’re doing in our studies or our work, we’re all leaving legacies that will tell our children what we did.”**

**— Taylor Notah**

Cronkite graduate Taylor Notah, editor of ASU’s Turning Points magazine, with another Cronkite graduate, Joseph Perez, who edited The State Press magazine before graduating in May 2021. Photo courtesy of Charlie Leight, ASU Now

## Cronkite grad guides magazine for Indigenous students with an eye to the past

Taylor Notah cares about journalism and history in equal measure.

**As the senior editor of ASU’s Turning Points magazine, she is responsible for producing the first Native student publication written entirely by and for Native American college students.** That means paying attention to the experiences of 3,200-plus self-identified Indigenous students at ASU and also recognizing the lessons of the past.

That was brought home to her one day when she was searching the ASU library archives for material for an article and found a photograph of several students,

including her father, protesting on campus more than 40 years ago.

Her father, Ferdinand Notah, who studied agriculture at ASU, was the first in the family to attend college.

“That was a really huge moment for me, to see this history and how I personally was affiliated with it,” said Notah, a 2018 Cronkite graduate. “From an Indigenous perspective, archivists are caretakers of stories and that’s a powerful position to be in. Archives can be viewed as our ancestors.”

Notah, who is Navajo, spoke about the importance of preserving the history of student activism at a national symposium in

2020 as part of Project STAND (Student Activism Now Documented), an initiative to help universities better record social justice on their campuses.

For an issue of the magazine devoted to the topic, she and her team turned to the archives to “research about students who decades ago advocated for more Native student representation and resources for Native students,” she said. “Chicano student groups and students of color were also advocating a lot back then.”

Turning Points was launched in 2016 after Native students at ASU were asked to describe their college experiences. Many spoke about feelings of loneliness, invisibility and disconnection from other Indigenous students and the difficulties they were having navigating ASU’s sprawling campus and accessing resources.

The magazine, which publishes once a semester and is distributed to Native students and faculty as well as tribal leadership across the country, is a way to combat that, providing both information about the campus and highlighting student stories.

“At ASU, despite the fact that we’re surrounded by tribal nations, it’s a common narrative that they’re the only Native in their class or sports team or dorm floor,” Notah said. “So it’s to remind people that we’re here, we exist, and there are major issues going on in our communities.”

She also hopes students will realize they are contributing to their own archives.

“Whatever we’re doing in our studies or our work, we’re all leaving legacies that will tell our children what we did,” she said. “It can come back full circle, like my story with my father.” ■

tackle a story. Whether it’s a little on the edge or whether it’s out of his comfort zone, he’s going to go do it because he wants to get the story.”

For now, Pietsch is adjusting to South Korea — the heat, the COVID-19 restrictions and the language. While it has been an adjustment, he said he’s excited to be at the Post. “It’s a great institution; I’m happy to be a part of it.

“It’s really weird because I graduated not even two years ago, and so it’s really cool to be doing this.” ■



Bryan Pietsch spent a semester at the Cronkite News Service’s Washington bureau. Photo courtesy of Bryan Pietsch

## Cronkite alumni



Bui



Bohner



Soto



Muggeridge



Vitkovskaya



O'Connor



Homan



Pell



Mendoza



Pietsch

## Cronkite alumni populate Washington Post newsroom

Cronkite alumni working at The Washington Post have plenty of company these days.

At last count, **10 Cronkite graduates were working at the Post** in jobs ranging from editor and reporter to video producer and art director. Many are relatively recent graduates, and all but one cut their teeth as members of The State Press, ASU's student media outlet.

I'm so proud of these talented young journalists," said Jason Manning, director of student media and a former Washington Post staff member himself. **"Each one has earned their position by developing skills that are needed in a 21st-century news organization."**

Between Cronkite and The State Press, they were given the opportunity to hone and practice those skills in a real world environment. Now they are at a place that is extremely well positioned to lead the profession of journalism into the future."

Manning, who was digital politics editor at the Post from 2006-2008 before joining ASU and the Cronkite School, said another key characteristic of the group is their willingness to help one another. "Each graduating class of State Pressers is always willing to reach back and lift up those who are still in school or just getting started in their careers," he said.

**Lynh Bui ('05)** is an editor on the Metro desk working with reporters who cover crime and courts in the Washington region. She joined the Post in 2012 as a fellow and went on to cover education, public safety and criminal justice. Before joining the Post, she worked at The Arizona Republic, covering politics and government affairs.

**Steven Bohner ('09)** is deputy editor for curation & platforms, helping run the team responsible for the Post's news app and relationships with distributed platforms such as Apple News and MSN. He joined the Post in 2014 as a producer and was part of the team that launched the Post's Snapchat Discover channel. Before coming to the Post, he was a digital media producer at The Arizona Republic.

**Amanda Soto ('10)** is art director and visual storyteller for food content, managing a team that creates photos, designs and illustrations across platforms such as Instagram. She previously served as the Post's art director for Local Living, Travel, and Arts & Style. Before joining the Post in 2014, she was features designer at Asbury Park Design Studio.

**Tessa Muggeridge ('11)** is director of subscriber engagement and newsletters. Her team

manages newsletters, alerts, community engagement, comments and subscriptions in the newsroom. She joined the company in 2011 as a producer on the Universal Desk and went on to multiple editing roles, including homepage editor, digital editor and newsletters and alerts editor.

**Julie Vitkovskaya ('13)** is a projects editor focusing on innovative storytelling and enterprise stories. She was previously the digital editor for foreign and national security. She joined the Post in 2015 after spending two years in South Korea working at an English-language newspaper as a Princeton in Asia fellow.

**Erin O'Connor ('14)** is a features video producer based in Phoenix, covering stories in the western U.S. Before joining the Post in 2015 as a video intern, he was a freelance documentary producer. While at Cronkite, he was director and photographer for the school's award-winning documentary "Hooked: Tracking Heroin's hold on Arizona" and was part of the Carnegie-Knight News21 program.

**Tess Homan ('15)** is multiplatform editor for emerging news products. She edits "The 7" morning briefing. She joined the Post in 2018 after four years at The Arizona Republic as homepage editor, social media producer and news producer.

**Samantha Pell ('17)** covers the Washington Capitals for the Post. She joined the company in 2017 as a sports intern and went on to cover high school sports. Previously, she interned for the sports department of the Dallas Morning News. At Cronkite, she covered Pac-12 football and basketball as a digital sports reporter for Cronkite News.

**Angel Mendoza ('18)** is social media editor, helping manage the Post's flagship accounts across Facebook, Twitter and emerging platforms. He joined the Post in 2021 after working as a social media producer and reporter at The Arizona Republic. At Cronkite, he was part of the 2018 Carnegie-Knight News21 project "Hate in America" and a Cronkite News investigative reporter.

**Bryan Pietsch ('19)** is a reporter covering breaking news from the Post's hub in Seoul. He previously reported for The New York Times in Colorado. He also held internships covering breaking business news at Business Insider in New York and regulatory policy and defense contractors at Reuters in Washington. ■



## Michaels receives baseball's Frick award

By Lisa Diethelm

**Al Michaels, a veteran sports broadcaster and Cronkite alumnus**, is the latest recipient of the 2021 Ford C. Frick Award from the National Baseball Hall of Fame.

The award is presented annually to a broadcaster who has made major contributions to the baseball industry. Michaels is the 45th recipient, joining other broadcast luminaries such as MLB Network Host and Play-by-Play Announcer Bob Costas, former CBS Sports and ESPN sportscaster Dick Enberg, and former Los Angeles Dodgers sportscaster Vin Scully.

Michaels has called some of the country's most memorable sporting events, including the 1989 World Series when an earthquake in the San Francisco Bay Area interrupted the game between the Oakland Athletics and San Francisco Giants and Michaels switched from calling a baseball game to providing breaking news updates on the natural disaster.

He is known for the legendary 1980 Lake Placid Winter Olympics when he exclaimed, "Do you believe in miracles?" after the U.S. beat the Soviet Union in ice hockey.



Photo courtesy of NBC Sports

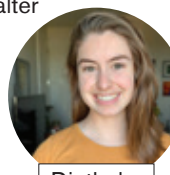
And his name is synonymous with NFL

football. He called Monday night games from 1986 through 2005 and has been on "Sunday Night Football" since.

Brett Kurland, director of strategic initiatives and sports programs, said Michaels is "a legend in his own time. He is synonymous with sports play-by-play, and has narrated so many of the greatest moments in sports going back at least 40 years."

While earning his degree, Michaels was sports editor for The State Press student newspaper and called ASU games for the student radio station, Blaze Radio.

In 1993, Michaels was inducted into the Cronkite Alumni Hall of Fame, which honors distinguished and accomplished alumni. And in 2002, he received the Walter Cronkite Award for Excellence in Journalism, which honors a leading figure in journalism each year. ■



Diethelm

## Cronkite alumna returns to Phoenix to lead 12News

**Fifteen years after graduating from the Cronkite School, Kate Morris is back in the Valley and leading 12News as president and general manager.**

Morris got her start in TV news even before graduating in 2005, working as a producer at FOX 10 in Phoenix. A year later, she headed to Idaho, where she grew up, to become executive producer at KTVB, the NBC affiliate in Boise. She spent the next decade there, working her way up to executive news director, then president and general manager, responsible for all aspects of the state's highest-rated and most-watched local news station.

In late 2020, Morris accepted the top position at 12News, KPNX-TV, which is part of the TEGNA network. She is one of less than 20 percent of general managers of large market local TV news stations who are women.

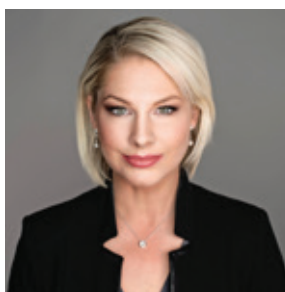
Cronkite Professor of Practice John

Misner, who served as president and general manager of 12News from

2002-2016, said he was thrilled to see Morris assume the role.

"Her return to Phoenix to lead the station I once led means a bright future for her, the team she leads, and the community the station serves," he said. "I know we can also count on Kate to be a wonderful partner to the school and to our students."

Morris already has begun that work as a member of the Cronkite Endowment Board of Trustees, composed of top media leaders from across the Valley who advise the dean and support the school through mentorship, internship and career opportunities and philanthropy. ■



## 'The 4:15' connects alumni with students

It's 4:15 p.m. on a Wednesday and alumni from around the country are dialing into the Cronkite School, ready to talk with students about their careers.

The alumni-student meet-ups, dubbed "The 4:15," were conceived as a way to connect current students with successful alums during the height of the pandemic when in-person meetings were not possible. They have become so successful that Mike Wong, director of Career Services, sees no end in sight.

Each month, Wong invites alumni who are working in interesting and exciting jobs to talk about their career paths. Each hour-long event features four Cronkite Nation alumni speaking in 15-minute windows.

Students have heard from political reporters, public affairs specialists, sports anchors, international correspondents, digital producers, polling editors, global branding and advertising professionals, among others. Participants have represented companies such as NBC, NASA, The New York Times, Reuters, USA Today, The Associated Press, Access Hollywood and Disney Studios.

One such session featured Erisa Nakano, an executive producer on the digital team at Spectrum Networks in Los Angeles; Marcia Chapman, a VP at Allison + Partners in Phoenix; Samantha Pell, an NHL beat writer for The Washington Post; and Maycie Timpone, the U.S. lead for video curation at Instagram in Los Angeles.

Wong described the sessions as "real-life, quick-hitting information give-and-takes" during which alumni share first-hand career knowledge and tips and students can ask questions.

He said other colleges on campus have gotten wind of "The 4:15" and are considering the idea for their own alumni and students.

Over the course of the year, about 175 Cronkite students participated in "The 4:15," which Wong sees as just the beginning. "It's so important for students to get in front of professionals and this is a great way to do it," he said. "The students who connect with Cronkite Nation alumni are making invaluable connections in the industry." ■

## Alumni notes

### Congrats Class of 2021

**Mackenzie Belley '21** (B.A.) is news producer at KREM-TV (CBS/TEGNA) in Spokane, Washington.

**Catie Chesire '21** (MASJ) is a fellow at Westword, an independent news website in Denver.

**Alexa Fuenmayor '21** (B.A.) is producer-in-residence at WTSP-TV (CBS/TEGNA) in Tampa, Florida.

**Jake Holter '21** (B.A.) is a multimedia journalist at WMBB-TV (ABC/Nexstar) in Panama City, Florida.

**Katelyn Keenehan '21** (B.A.) is a MSJ at WBIR-TV (NBC/TEGNA) in Knoxville, Tennessee.

**Cassandra Laubach '21** (M.M.C.) is producer-in-residence at KGW-TV (NBC/TEGNA) in Portland, Oregon.

**Tyler Manion '21** (B.A.) is a multimedia journalist at WTOG-TV (CBS/Gray TV) in Savannah, Georgia.

**Sarandon Raboin '21** (B.A.) is producer-in-residence at WHAS-TV (ABC/TEGNA) in Louisville, Kentucky.

**Delaney White '21** (M.M.C.) is a multimedia journalist at KSBY-TV (NBC/Scripps) in

Santa Barbara/San Luis Obispo, California. **2020**

**Agya Aning '20** (M.A.) is a reporter for InsideClimate News in Baltimore.

**Andy Blye '20** (M.A.) is a banking and technology reporter at the Phoenix Business Journal.

**José Ignacio Castaneda '20** (B.A.) is the underserved communities reporter for The News Journal in Wilmington, Delaware.

**Andrew Diaz Christiansen '20** (B.A.) is a multimedia journalist at KZTV (CBS/SagamoreHill Broadcasting) in Corpus Christi, Texas.

**Harry Croton '20** (M.A.) is anchor/reporter for WEEK-TV (NBC/ABC/Gray TV) in Peoria, Illinois.

**Alison Cutler '20** (B.A.) is government watchdog and data reporter at NewsLeaderNOW in Staunton, Virginia.

**Sarah Donahue '20** (B.A.) is a staff reporter at Times Media Group in Phoenix.

**Alex Gaul '20** (B.A.) is a multimedia journalist at WEEK-TV (NBC/ABC/Gray TV) in Peoria, Illinois.

**Kara Harris '20** (B.A.) is newsroom associate producer at CNN in Atlanta.

**Hadley Heck '20** (M.A.) is an MMJ at KVAL-TV (CBS/Sinclair) in Eugene, Oregon.

**Janay Kinsgerry '20** (B.S. Digital Audiences) is multiplatform editor for "The Lily" at The Washington Post in Washington, D.C.

**Rob Kleifield '20** (M.A.) is a digital content assistant at Bally Sports in Minneapolis.

**Caroline Linch '20** (B.A.) is a multimedia journalist at WTVM-TV (ABC/Gray TV) in Columbus, Georgia.

**Nicole Ludden '20** (B.A.) is local government reporter at The Arizona Daily Star in Tucson, Arizona.

**Dylan McKim '20** (B.A.) is a multimedia journalist/producer at KVIA-TV (ABC/News-Press & Gazette) in El Paso, Texas.

**Stephanie Morse '20** (M.M.C.) is marketing content coordinator for EdPlus at ASU in Seattle.

**Rio Paynter '20** (B.A.) is public relations and content specialist at knoodle, an advertising, branding and digital marketing agency in Phoenix.

**Rachel Phillips '20** (M.A.) is an MMJ at

## Dedera remembered for contributions to journalism

**Don Dedera**, a prolific journalist, author and Arizona historian whose career spanned 60 years, passed away in March 2020. He was 90 years old.

Dedera, who was among the first graduates of ASU's journalism program, worked as a columnist and a Vietnam War correspondent for The Arizona Republic and as editor of Arizona Highways magazine. He wrote more than 20 books on Arizona history.

Dedera started his journalism career right out of high school as a combat photographer for the U.S. Marine Corps from 1946 to 1948. After his discharge from the Marines, he enrolled at ASU, then known as Arizona State College, and served as editor of The State Press student newspaper. He graduated in 1951 with a degree in journalism.

Dedera won numerous journalism awards, including the Ernie Pyle Memorial Award, National Society of Arts and Letters Literary Award, and Lowell Thomas Award. He was named a charter member of the



Nancy and Don Dedera

Photo courtesy of Nancy Dedera

Cronkite School Hall of Fame and remained connected to the school throughout the years.

He leaves behind his wife of more than 40 years, Anne Kovel "Nancy" Dedera, who was food editor and women's editor at the Boston Herald and who served as executive director of public relations and advertising for The Dial Corp. for many years. To honor her husband's legacy and their life together, Nancy Dedera made a gift in 2020 to support Cronkite students. The Nancy and Don Dedera Conference Room is named in appreciation of the couple's many contributions to the school.

"It was such a privilege to get to know Don," said Liz Bernreuter, executive director for special initiatives and former development director for the school. "He and his beloved wife Nancy would visit the Cronkite School during alumni weekends, and he would regale students with tales from his time working for The State Press. With his wit, his generous spirit and his spellbinding stories, he truly was larger than life."

"The impact he's had on Arizona journalism, on ASU and on the Cronkite School is indelible – and Nancy was a huge part of that." ■



KVIA-TV (ABC/News-Press & Gazette) in El Paso, Texas.

**Kim Rapanut '20** (B.A.) is a multiplatform editor at The Washington Post in Washington, D.C.

**Hannah Reim '20** (B.A.) is social media manager at Classy Closets in Chandler, Arizona.

**Calah Schlabach '20** (M.M.C.) is development writer/editor at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities in Washington, D.C.

**Zoey Shircel '20** (B.A.) is content specialist and brand ambassador at Visit Mesa in Mesa, Arizona.

**Troy Tauscher '20** (M.M.C.) is a producer at KJRH/Griffin Communications in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

## 2019

**Lynsey Amundson '19** (M.M.C.) is a reporter at KIVI-TV (ABC/Scripps) in Boise, Idaho.

**Matthew Andujo '19** (B.A.) is marketing coordinator at Desert North Realty in Scottsdale, Arizona.

**Nisa Ayril '19** (B.A.) is social media manager and features editor at ICONIC LIFE Magazine in Scottsdale, Arizona.

**Bradey King '19** (M.A.) is a sports

anchor/reporter at KJTV (FOX/Ramar Communications) in Lubbock, Texas.

**Lauren Bukoskey '19** (B.A.) is multimedia advertising and event coordinator at Puget Sound Business Journal in Seattle.

**Isaac Colindres '19** (B.A.) is a correspondent for the Southern California News Group in the Los Angeles metro area, reporting for the San Gabriel Valley Tribune in Monrovia.

**Hana DeMent '19** (B.A.) is digital and brand experience coordinator at United Heritage Credit Union in Austin, Texas.

**Amy-Xiaoshi DePaola '19** (M.M.C.) is West Hub digital producer at Gannett, USA Today Network, based in Phoenix.

**Kiya Gaskin '19** (B.A.) is digital producer at The Louisville Courier Journal in Kentucky.

**Kaleb Martinez '19** (B.A.) is sports producer for iHeartMedia in Phoenix.

**McKenzie Neibert '19** (M.A. '19) is digital coordinator for Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) in Las Vegas.

**Victor Ren '19** (B.A.) is digital designer for the NBA Oklahoma City Thunder in Oklahoma.

**Alyssa Ruiz '19** (M.M.C.) is sales content marketing specialist at Investis



## Young graduate remembered for excellence and heart

By Lisa Diethelm

**Paulina Verbera** was a high school junior when she first came to the Cronkite School.

The summer high school journalism program convinced her that she was where she was meant to be, and a year later she returned to begin working toward both her bachelor's and master's degrees.

Verbera took advantage of every minute, earning a reputation as a driven journalist, an excellent student and someone who could always be counted on to help others. It's a legacy that lives on after she was killed in a car accident in Mexico Jan. 16, 2021.

Only 22 years old and right out of school, Verbera was working for the Raza Development Fund, where she had interned, in support of Latino and poor families. She also spent the previous summer working as a mentor for other students attending the Cronkite high school program she had so loved.

Those who knew her, like former instructor Valeria Fernández, called her "a ray of sunshine. She was ... pure talent and heart," Fernández said. "She excelled in everything she did."

While a student, Verbera worked as a reporter in Cronkite News and Cronkite Noticias, the school's Spanish-language news website, often covering immigration and border issues. She also completed the Digital Audiences lab, where she honed her social media and digital analytics skills. And she served as president and treasurer of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists' student club.

One spring semester she traveled with a group of students to Peru to report on an immigration crisis in that country. Rick Rodriguez, the Southwest Borderlands Initiative Professor who led that trip, said he was heartbroken by her loss. "She was a great person with a bright future," he said. ■

## Ellis leaves legacy in TV, radio and teaching

**Robert Harry Ellis**, the first general manager of KAET/Arizona PBS, died in March 2021 at the age of 93 after battling bone cancer and kidney disease.

Ellis, an ASU alumnus, began working at ASU in 1959 as director of radio operations and led the new television station, then known as KAET, from its launch in 1961 until 1987. He oversaw many of the station's milestones, from the first nightly newscast in 1962 and the first purchase of color cameras in 1968 to the station's first on-air fundraising event in 1975 and the creation of the long-running public affairs program "Arizona Horizon" in 1981.

Ellis was an associate professor at ASU, teaching a broadcast management class for 25 years and retired as the associate vice president for university relations.

In addition, he was a founding member of the ASU Retirees Association, the Tempe Sports Authority and the Tempe Visitors and Convention Bureau and served on several boards, including



the Phoenix Zoo Board, the Arizona Humanities Council and the national board of the Public Broadcasting Service. He is a member of the ASU College of Public Programs Hall of Fame and the Arizona Broadcasters Hall of Fame.

The Robert H. and Frankie Jo Ellis / KAET Scholarship provides financial support for Cronkite undergraduate students. To make a gift in memory of Robert Ellis, please visit [asufoundation.org/ellis scholarship](https://asufoundation.org/ellis scholarship). ■

Digital marketing agency in Phoenix.

**Grayson Schmidt '19** (M.M.C.) is a writer/multimedia storyteller at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles.

**Madison Staten '19** (B.A.) is a multimedia reporter at KRWG-TV (PBS) in Las Cruces, New Mexico.

**Kyle Warren '19** (B.A.) is assistant editor at Green Living Magazine in Scottsdale, Arizona.

**Quindrea Yazzie '19** (B.A.) is news reporter and TV editor at IndianCountryToday.com in Phoenix.

## 2018

**Nicole Ashton '18** (J.M.C.) is program coordinator on the Career Services team at the Cronkite School in Phoenix.

**Allison Bailey '18** (B.A.) is associate producer for audio at NBCUniversal Media in New York.

**Savannah Haas '18** (B.A.) is account executive at J. Lauren PR in Tempe, Arizona.

**Megan Janetsky '18** (B.A.) is a Colombia-based freelance journalist covering migration, gender issues and human rights in Latin America.

**Sloane McGowan '18** (B.A.) is communication specialist at Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando, Florida.

**Chloe Ranshaw '18** (M.M.C.) is creative services manager at the Foundation for Blind Children in Phoenix.

**Olivia Richard '18** (B.A.) is associate producer/podcasts at NBC News and MSNBC in New York.

**Keerthi Vedantam '18** (B.A.) is a bioscience reporter at dot.LA, an independent publication in Los Angeles focusing on startup and technology news.

**Briann Wagner '18** (B.A.) is lead news analyst at Dataminr, a social media analytics company in Phoenix.

## 2017

**Chelsey Ballarte '17** (B.A.) is public affairs specialist at NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas.

**Karsen Buschjost '17** (M.A.) is evening anchor at KMID Big 2 News (ABC/Nexstar) in Midland/Odessa, Texas.

**Charles Clark '17** (B.A.) is a columnist at The San Diego Union-Tribune in California.

**Diego Mendoza-Moyers '17** (B.A.) is a business reporter at the San Antonio Express-News in Texas.

**Samantha Pell '17** (B.A.) is a sports journalist covering the NHL Washington Capitals for The Washington Post in Washington, D.C.

**Nicole Praga '17** (M.M.C.) is assistant

director of strategic communications with Penn State Athletics in State College, Pennsylvania.

**Anthony Prosceno '17** (B.A.) is a producer at KTBC-TV (FOX O & O) in Austin, Texas.

**Taylor Rearick '17** (B.A.) is brand marketing coordinator at Cloth & Flame, Phoenix.

**Sandra (Wilson) Robinson '17** (B.A.) is associate managing editor at ClearVoice content marketing solutions company in Phoenix.

**Rebecca Smouse '17** (B.A.) is program coordinator on the Career Services team at the Cronkite School in Phoenix.

**Annika Wolters '17** (M.A.) is a video producer with The Associated Press in Bangkok, Thailand.

## 2016

**Gabrielle Abbott '16** (B.A.) is western regional communications manager at the All Voting is Local organization.

**Emily Achondo '16** (B.A.) is retail marketing director at Diablo Magazine in Walnut Creek, California.

**Aubrey Badger '16** (B.A.) is associate director for performance marketing for the ASU Enterprise Marketing Hub.

**Junelle Bautista '16** (B.A.) is marketing director at Mpulse Communications in Chandler, Arizona.

**Jordan Baxter '16** (B.A.) is member communications manager at PetSmart in Scottsdale, Arizona.

**Kate Beeso '16** (B.A.) is director of product marketing/sales for Prestige Power in Orange County, California.

**Ashley Bigley '16** (B.A.) is a motion graphics/video editor at BrandLync agency in Phoenix.

**Anna Copper '16** (M.M.C.) is content strategist at Radancy global talent technology company in Chicago.

**Erica Cron '16** (B.A.) is social media coordinator at the TeePublic company in Los Angeles.

**Laura Davis '16** (B.A.) is multimedia developer for e-learning and instruction at ASU's Hayden Library.

**Alexis Dominguez '16** (B.A.) is an evening news anchor at WDJT-TV (CBS 58 Telemundo) in Milwaukee.

**Megan Kavy '16** (B.A.) is marketing and digital engagement specialist at the Society for Cardiovascular Angiography & Interventions in Washington, D.C.

**Nick Krueger '16** (B.A.) is social media coordinator at Charleston County Parks & Recreation in South Carolina.

**Erin Mondt '16** (B.A.) is office and events coordinator at Adams County Regional Economic Partnership in Broomfield, Colorado.

**Miguel Otárola '16** (B.A. & M.A.) is climate and environment reporter for Colorado Public Radio.

**Lauren Potter '16** (B.A.) is a freelance storyteller, photographer and social media specialist with a focus on covering small business, residential developments, lifestyle and arts and culture.

**Shay Roddy '16** (B.A.) is a correspondent at Cape May County Herald in Rio Grande, New Jersey.

**Katryna Seki '16** (M.M.C.) is a media producer at Carvana car sales in Phoenix.

**Julia Thatcher '16** (B.A.) is morning news anchor at KEPR-TV (CBS/CW/Sinclair) in the Tri-Cities area of Pasco, Richland and Kennewick in Washington state.

## 2015

**Stephen DeLorenzo '15** (B.A.) is a producer for NASCAR in Charlotte, North Carolina.

**Tess Homan '15** (B.A.) is multiplatform editor for emerging news products at The Washington Post in Washington, D.C.

**Adriana Loya '15** (B.A.) is a bilingual reporter/multi-skilled journalist at 12News (NBC/TEGNA) in Phoenix.

**Emily Nichols '15** (B.A.) is manager of internal/strategic communications at McDonald's in Chicago.

**Sierra Oshrin '15** (B.A.) is an account manager at Allison + Partners in Singapore.

**Adrianna Ovnicek '15** (B.A.) is senior marketing project manager at Group 14 Technologies, Woodinville, Washington.

**Mercedes Santana '15** (B.A.) is social marketing manager for global at Airbnb, Los Angeles.

**Nicole Stein '15** (B.A.) is communications associate at JP Morgan Chase & Co. in Chicago.

## 2014

**Erisa Nakano '14** (B.A.) is executive producer/digital at Spectrum News1SoCal in Los Angeles.

**Christopher Pena '14** (J.M.C.) is social media manager at HarperCollins Publishers in New York.

**Jessica Ramirez '14** (B.A.) is marketing and PR specialist at Banner Health in Phoenix.

**Gabriela Rodiles '14** (B.A.) is social media manager at the Food Network in New York.

**Maycie Timpone '14** (B.A.) is curation



lead/reels at Instagram in Los Angeles.

**2013**

**Yvonne Gonzalez '13** (B.A.) is West desk editor at The Associated Press in Phoenix.

**John Spataro '13** (B.A.) is general manager at Franklin Media Group in Chicago.

**Anne Stegen '13** (B.A.) is director of digital content at KSDK-TV (NBC/TEGNA) in St. Louis.

**2012**

**Blake Essig '12** (B.A.) is an international correspondent for CNN in Tokyo.

**Jarrod Nelson '12** (M.M.C.) is a digital content producer at Amazon Live in New York.

**J. Weston Pippin '12** (B.A.) is a freelance magazine writer and editor based in Sante Fe, New Mexico.

**Lina Washington '12** (B.A.) is a sports anchor/reporter at KPNX (NBC/TEGNA) in Phoenix.

**Melanie Yamaguchi '12** (M.M.C.) is senior digital producer at Hawaii News Now in Honolulu.

**Leslie Sims '12** (B.A.) is a script coordinator at "Saturday Night Live" in New York.

**Jessica Testa '12** (M.M.C.) is a reporter for fashion news and styles at The New York Times, stationed in New York.

**2011**

**Steve Doty '11** (B.A.) is director of communications for Powering Chicago, an electrical industry labor-management partnership in the greater Chicago area.

**2010**

**Becky Bartkowski '10** (B.A.) is features director at The Arizona Republic in Phoenix.

**Zach Fowle '10** (B.A.) is marketing director at Arizona Wilderness Brewing in Phoenix.

**Charlsy Panzino '10** (B.A.) is auto reporter for S&P Global Market Intelligence in Arlington, Virginia.

**Maxine Park '10** (B.A.) is executive producer/theatrical marketing at Walt Disney Studios in Los Angeles.

**Lauren Peikoff '10** (B.A.) is executive producer at MSNBC in New York.

**Michael Seiden '10** (B.A.) is a reporter at WSB-TV (ABC/Cox Media Group) in Atlanta.

**2009**

**Elizabeth Shell '09** (M.M.C.) is editor for social graphics at USA Today in Arlington, Virginia.

**2005**

**Zahid Arab '05** (B.A.) is public affairs manager at Uber in San Francisco.

**Kim Taylor, '05** (B.A.) is CEO & Founder

### In Memoriam

The Cronkite School respectfully honors these alumni and friends who we have lost. We keep their families and loved ones in our hearts as we pause to remember the many contributions they made to the Cronkite School.

Peggy Bryant '52

Marilyn Buresh

Jennifer Church Hightower '91

Don Dederer '51

John Ellerman

Robert Ellis '53 and Frankie Jo

Ellis '51 '64

James Emery '75 '81

Connie Flegenheimer

Vartan Gregorian

Gail Harrison '85

Brian Paul Haugen '95

Donna Hicks '84 '89

Eric Hofstetter '87

Shanna Hogan '05

Tasha Kostantacos '78

John Mellor '97

Janice Merkel

Scott Merrill '80

Lauren Millette '90

Carol Osman Brown '63

Maribel Pena '08

Robert Petty '70

Earl Petznick

Charles Pratt '76

Julian Reveles '60

Eleanor Robb

John Roberts

Robert Stedelin '59

Donald Ulrich

Paulina Verbera '19 '20

James Ward '76

Bradford Wilbur '88

at Cluster, a company that specializes in the hiring of mechanical & electrical engineers in Los Angeles.

**2004**

**Andres Diaz '04** (B.A.) is a field producer at Access Hollywood in Los Angeles.

**Brandon Mendoza '04** (B.A.) is manager, transaction coordinators, at Opendoor in Phoenix.

**2003**

**Russell Gottesman '03** (B.A.) is CEO & Founder of CommuterADs and The Closing companies in Dayton, Ohio.

**Dawn Jones '03** (B.A.) is chief diversity and inclusion officer and vice president of social impact at Intel Corporation in Chandler.

**2001**

**Tarik Flannagan '01** (B.A.) is a segment producer at "The Dr. Oz Show" in New York.

**2000**

**Carolina Bermudez '00** (B.A.) is host of the show "Carolina Bermudez with Greg T in the Morning" in New York.

**Marcia Chapman '00** (B.A.) is vice president at Allison + Partners in Phoenix.

**Chris Kahn '00** (M.M.C.) is polling editor at Thomson Reuters in New York.

**1997**

**John Mellor '97** (B.A.) is president and CEO of WorkInSports.com, Phoenix.

**1996**

**Abbott Miller '96** (B.A.) is owner of AMP Studios, Phoenix.

**Marina Nicola '96** (B.A.) is president and chief marketing officer of The Vox Agency, Las Vegas.

**1995**

**Dominique Omahen '95** (B.A.) is a production management executive at Telepictures in Los Angeles.

**1994**

**Tracee Larocca '94** (B.A.) is senior vice president, global marketing for Taco Bell in Irvine, California.

**Ann Noder '94** (B.A.) is CEO and president of Pitch Public Relations in Chandler, Arizona.

**1990**

**Julianne Yamamoto King '90** (B.A.) is president of the Hawaii Autism Foundation.

**Jim Brewer '90** (B.A.), is executive director of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society Desert Region.

**1982**

**Liz Dufour '82** (B.A.) is a photojournalist at The Cincinnati Enquirer in Cincinnati.

## Your support makes all the difference

Thanks to the generosity of the Cronkite community, future journalism and communication leaders received life-changing scholarships, students had access to real-world learning experiences, faculty pursued new research endeavors — and the school persevered through an academic year unlike any other.

More than 35 media outlets, communication agencies and individual industry leaders sponsored the 2021 Cronkite Award for Excellence in Journalism, raising over \$155,000, despite being unable to gather in person for the traditional luncheon.

And new gifts made possible a range of programs and scholarships that already are making a difference in the lives of students. They include:

- New scholarships that enable students to complete their education or enhance it by studying abroad
- A journalism contest that will recognize the nation's best reporting on underserved communities
- A student reporting project that will document the health effects associated with a critical shortage of housing in Arizona
- A visiting professorship that brings professional visual journalists to the school each year to work with students

**Your gifts made all of this possible, and we thank you.**

### Lifetime giving

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### Thank you to our generous supporters.

The Cronkite School is most grateful to the alumni, parents, faculty, staff, students, board members and industry leaders who provide philanthropic gifts to support scholarships and professional programs, bolster faculty research and provide assistance to students pursuing their dreams.

We extend our sincere thanks to the following individuals, foundations and corporate partners who have generously helped advance the school's mission.

These donors made contributions between July 1, 2020, and June 30, 2021.

#### \$1 Million +

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**continued ...**





Paul B. Anderson (right) established an awards contest in honor of his friend Ed Shaufler. Photo courtesy of Paul B. Anderson

## Shaufler prize to recognize storytelling that promotes understanding

By Lisa Diethelm

Paul B. Anderson, the principal & CEO of Workhouse Media of Seattle, Washington, has established The Shaufler Prize in Journalism at the Cronkite School to recognize the best journalism in the country that advances understanding of underserved communities.

The contest is open to both professional and student journalists writing about LGBTQ-identifying individuals, communities of colors, Indigenous peoples or immigrants and the issues that disproportionately affect these populations.

"I think that great storytelling, particularly storytelling around real human experiences, gives us a chance to learn about things that aren't native to our own existence," Anderson said. "Great journalism provides a window to people's lives that I hope can make us end up a little bit more empathetic with each other."

Anderson established the prize to honor his late friend, Ed Shaufler, who died in late 2020 and who cared deeply about promoting understanding of underrepresented

people. "Ed was a great observer of human behavior, both individually and in groups," Anderson said. "He and I spent years just talking about journalism and stories and society. Ed loved that intellectual engagement around journalism, and I thought we should put his name to something that may have immediate and lasting impact for a journalist."

Anderson's gift will support a total of four awards. First-, second- and third-place awards will honor work by professional journalists, and another prize will honor the work of a student enrolled at an accredited journalism program in the U.S. The cash prizes are: professional first place, \$10,000; professional second place, \$3,000; professional third place, \$2,000 and student prize, \$5,000. The first awards will be given in spring 2022.

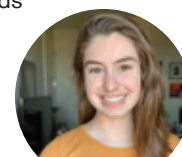
Anderson said he hopes the contest will encourage the kind of in-depth coverage that he and Ed loved to talk about "and propel the world forward in ways that we can all grow as a society."

Lindsay Walker, Cronkite director of development, said the creation of The

Shaufler Prize "will help shine a much-needed light on the critical role that in-depth reporting plays in telling the important and oftentimes unheard stories of people from diverse communities. All of us at Cronkite extend deep gratitude to Paul for his generosity and partnership in making this national journalism contest at Cronkite a reality."

This is not the first time Anderson has contributed to ASU. In 2010, after the passing of Shaufler's partner Mark Bowland, Anderson and Shaufler created the Mark Bowland Leadership Scholarship, the first LGBTQ-focused scholarship program at ASU.

The Cronkite School manages two other annual national journalism contests: the Katherine Schneider Journalism Award for Excellence in Reporting on Disability; and the Barlett & Steele Awards recognizing the best investigative business reporting. ■



Diethelm



Photo courtesy of Gomez family

## **Pedro Gomez Scholarship** honors memory of one of baseball journalism's greats

"If we all live our lives the way Pedro Gomez led his life, we're doing it right."

Those words from Brett Kurland, director of strategic initiatives and sports programs at Cronkite, captured what many felt after the unexpected death of Pedro Gomez, an Arizona-based reporter for ESPN who was a frequent presence at the Cronkite School.

Gomez, who was 58 years old when he died, was a beloved presence at the school, often visiting classes, making speaking appearances and mentoring students. Moreover, "he was the first to share advice and wisdom when he encountered a Cronkite student in a clubhouse, to welcome them in and show them the ropes, to give them a word of encouragement," Kurland said.

Gomez began his career in Florida, where he was born shortly after his parents fled Cuba. He grew up in Miami and attended the University of Miami before launching his baseball writing career, working for papers in California and Florida as well as The Arizona Republic. He joined ESPN in 2003.

Over the course of his career, he covered 25 World Series and 22 All-Star Games, according to an ESPN biography.

The Gomez Family, along with friends and former colleagues of Gomez, established the Pedro Gomez Scholarship to honor his memory and carry on the contributions he made to sports journalism students.

"The scholarship, I would imagine, is exactly what Pedro would want," said Paola Boivin, director of the Cronkite News Phoenix Sports Bureau, and who worked with Gomez at the Republic. "He was always about helping others, whether they were journalists or just people who were underserved. People know him as such a great baseball mind, but I know him more for having a bigger heart."

"When I think of Pedro, the first thing that comes to mind is his generosity and his humility," said Marco Peralta, a Cronkite student who was mentored by Gomez.

"The biggest compliment I have ever obtained is that a colleague mentioned to me that I reminded them of Pedro Gomez. I'm not at the level Pedro was at, and I don't think I'll ever be, but I hope to one day be like him and make him proud. I will carry his legacy everywhere I go." ■

To make a gift to the **Pedro Gomez Scholarship**, visit [asufoundation.org/pedrogomez](https://asufoundation.org/pedrogomez) or contact Lindsay Walker, director of development, at [lindsay.d.walker@asu.edu](mailto:lindsay.d.walker@asu.edu) or 602-496-5052.



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Anita and Kip Helt

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House of Broadcasting  
Hubbard Radio Phoenix  
Phyllis Hughes '68 '85 and  
Mark Hughes '66  
Lisa and Gordon James  
KASW CW6  
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FOX 10 Phoenix  
Kathy and Timothy Kurkjian  
Laura Levine  
Robert Ley  
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Manaster  
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## Harkavy scholarship encourages future investigative reporters

The Harkavy Scholarship for Investigative Reporting was established at the Cronkite School in 2020 to honor the memory of Valley reporter Ward Harkavy, “the gruff and lovable Lou Grant of the alt-weekly world” who died of COVID-19 in May 2020.

The scholarship is presented annually to a journalism student who is “willing to stand up for social justice, speak truth to power — and always turn in clean copy.” The inaugural recipient is Genesis Alvarado, a senior at the Cronkite School.

After earning a bachelor’s degree from the University of Kansas in 1970, Harkavy worked as an editor and reporter at the Journal-World in Lawrence, Kansas; The

Arizona Republic; Phoenix New Times; Westword in Denver; the Long Island Voice; and The Village Voice in New York City.

During his 40-year journalism career, he reported on a range of social justice issues, calling out hypocrisy wherever he found it. He was known for his news judgment, accurate reporting and dedication to teaching others. He often would take young journalists under his wing to mentor and champion them.

Harkavy’s friend, Cynthia Cotts, spearheaded fundraising for the scholarship, inviting people from his network to contribute. Thus far, more than \$15,000 has been raised from 84 donors, including

Terry Greene Sterling, writer-in-residence and faculty affiliate at the Cronkite School. Greene Sterling and Harkavy were on the staff of Phoenix New Times in the late 1980s.

“At the time, alt-weekly journalism was enjoying unprecedented popularity and power as news consumers developed a love of long-form narratives,” Greene Sterling said. “Ward edited my 1989 investigative series exposing how the self-protective Diocese of Phoenix hid its pedophile priests, thus enabling some to continue preying on children. It was a gut-wrenchingly painful series to report, write and edit, but I’ll never forget how Ward and I talked each other through it. He was an untiringly precise and fearless journalist as well as an unforgettable friend.”

John Leach, former managing editor at the Republic, said Harkavy was the kind of editor who improved every story — “turning the mediocre into good work and good work into excellent work” — and who challenged and nurtured reporters.

“Ward would love seeing an investigative reporting scholarship in his name,” Leach said. “His message to the students would be simple: Aim high, do great work, hold the powerful accountable, raise hell.” ■

## Arizona Community Foundation supports project on housing and health

Cronkite students will explore the impact of Arizona’s acute housing shortage on the health of diverse communities with a new grant from the Arizona Community Foundation.

Under the \$80,000 grant, the school’s News Co/Lab will convene listening sessions in fall 2021 with Maricopa County residents who face housing insecurity and whose health has been impacted as a result.

The community dialogue will help inform a student reporting project in the spring 2022 semester that will give voice to those most directly impacted by Arizona’s housing shortage. The multimedia, multilingual project will be published at Cronkite News

and distributed to news organizations around the state.

The project will employ a solution’s journalism approach, said Kristy Roschke, managing director of the News Co/Lab, which works on projects related to news literacy and audience engagement. The approach involves not just identifying problems, but seeking ways to resolve them, she said.

In 2020, the Arizona Community Foundation supported another Cronkite project that resulted in a half-hour documentary on the youth suicide crisis in Arizona. ■



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## New **Silcock fund** helps students gain international experiences

By Lisa Diethelm

“Dr. Bill” may have retired, but he isn’t quite done creating opportunities for Cronkite students.

Former Assistant Dean B. William Silcock, better known as “Dr. Bill” to scores of students, established a scholarship fund, along with his wife, Angela, to help students experience other countries and cultures.

The Angela and Bill Silcock Global Experience Fund provides financial support for Cronkite students to participate in study abroad programs or other professional opportunities, such as internships in other countries.

Silcock retired in December 2020 after nearly 20 years at the school, during which time he served as assistant dean, head of the school’s doctoral program, curator of the Hubert H. Humphrey Fulbright Fellowship and associate and assistant professor.

The Silcocks, who often invited students into their home over the holidays, said they

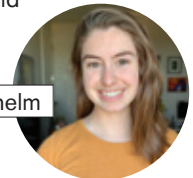


met many who had to take out loans or work multiple jobs in order to afford to travel abroad. That spurred them to establish the new fund.

“I think that it will help lots of students, and I think it will help them be better reporters, and it will help us as a school to have a greater cultural awareness,” Silcock said. “We talk a lot about emotional literacy or EQ, but there’s a cultural quotient, too, about how culturally aware you are. And a part of that you just can’t get out of a book or understand from listening to a great professor, no matter how good.”

Reynolds Professor of Business Journalism and former Interim Dean Kristin Gilger said the new fund will help achieve

the Silcocks’ goal of making international experiences available to a wide swath of students. “If he had his way, every single Cronkite student would have that opportunity, and they would be better citizens of the world as a result,” she said. ■



Diethelm

To make a donation to the **Angela and Bill Silcock Global Experience Fund**, visit [asu.foundation.org/silcockfund](https://asu.foundation.org/silcockfund) or contact Lindsay Walker, director of development, at [lindsay.d.walker@asu.edu](mailto:lindsay.d.walker@asu.edu) or 602-496-5052.

## **Bennett fund** honors former journalism chair

A journalism alumna is creating an endowment fund in the name of a former Cronkite journalism chair to show her gratitude for his mentorship and support.

The ElDean Bennett Memorial Endowment Fund is being established by Lauren Abel, an alumna of ASU’s College of Public Programs, which was the home of the Cronkite School before it became an independent unit.

The dean may use the funds to support educational efforts and programs that benefit the school.

Since she graduated from ASU, Abel has established herself as an entrepreneur, public relations and health expert with her Abel to Cook, Abel Fitness Training and Abel Associates Public Relations companies.

“Dr. Bennett’s kindness, guidance and faith in my ability drove my entire college education experience,” Abel said. “His support has driven every aspect of my



ElDean Bennett (left) and Lauren Abel

career...from my first career in radio news, to my second career as the owner of a public relations company, to my current career in health care. Dr. Bennett taught me how to be a good public servant, whether telling others about what is going on in their community and the world or helping others live a higher quality of life.”

Bennett became chair of the journalism program in 1979 and helped establish the Walter Cronkite Endowment in honor of Cronkite, former anchor and managing editor of the CBS Evening News. The endowment provides a broad range of

support for scholarships, fellowships and faculty chair and professorship positions.

Cronkite Professor John Craft, who has taught at the school since 1973, remembers Bennett as an effective leader and fundraiser, but he said what stood out most was his focus on students.

Bennett, he said, was a “fatherly kind of guy” who would spend hours with students, talking with them about their academic programs and progress, offering career advice, sharing insights and listening to their concerns.

Abel remembers Bennett coming to her aid when she first arrived at ASU, helping her enroll in classes, even though it seemed they were all full, and then serving as her adviser.

“Not a day goes by that I don’t think fondly of Dr. Bennett and thank him in my heart for all that he has done for me,” she said. ■



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**The Cronkite School is pleased to recognize the newest members of the Endowment Board of Trustees who joined during fiscal year 2021.** The Endowment Board is made up of top media and communication leaders from across the Valley and provides important volunteer and funding support for the school. Cronkite is grateful to all members of the board who ensure the advancement of the school's mission.

### Kim Covington

**Vice President, Community Initiatives, Arizona Community Foundation**

"It has never been more exciting for students to learn at the Cronkite School because understanding the power of great journalism and storytelling is more critical than ever before. With growing misinformation, we depend on journalists who are our beacons of truth. When students receive hands-on experiences at Cronkite News, it unlocks their creativity and enables them to find new ways to uncover the truth, inform the public and promote and improve civic engagement."



Covington

### Joe Donnarumma

**President and General Manager, Univision Communications Inc.**

"My motivation to support Cronkite stems from a passion for our business as journalists and storytellers. We have a unique and critical responsibility to inform and advocate for our community. Cronkite is a legacy institution that has a rich history in developing community leaders and advocates. Univision has been fortunate to work closely with Cronkite and hire graduates that have become important members of our journalism team."



Donnarumma

### Dawn Jones

**Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, Vice President of Social Impact, Intel Corporation**

"Since graduating from the Cronkite School in 2003, I have seen the school grow and thrive, and supporting its mission is easy for me. The school remains on the cutting edge with its curriculum and technology (and) providing students with an innovative approach to journalism. I'm also impressed by the fact that Cronkite doesn't shy away from tough social challenges; it addresses them. Through its diversity principles, Cronkite explores multiple sides of critical social issues, which is needed more than ever to ensure news is balanced and that those reporting and making decisions are reflective of our society and a range of views."



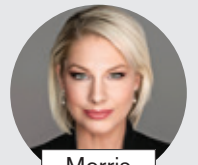
Jones



### Kate Morris

**President and General Manager, KPNX Phoenix, KNAZ Flagstaff, KMSB and KTTU Tucson**

"I have great admiration for the work the Cronkite School has been doing to foster the next generation of journalists with a focus on connecting communities, better serving audiences and truly innovating for the future of our industry. I am inspired by this next generation of journalists and what motivates them to be storytellers. I find purpose in helping guide student journalists or new graduates to create memorable work and find meaningful career paths."



Morris

### Emerson Yearwood

**Associate General Counsel and Director of Regulatory Affairs, Cable One**

"I support the mission of the Cronkite School because I very much recognize the role the press plays to maintain a free society. It's critical to invest in the future of journalism for our society. The school provides a tradition and standard set by Walter Cronkite that holds the school to a very high standard. The school is one of the finest institutions in the state."



Yearwood





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## Conference room now bears Misner name

The John and Angela Misner Conference Room on the sixth floor of the Cronkite School is more than just a name on a room. It represents the vision of two people who saw a need and acted to fulfill it.

The Misners made a \$50,000 donation to the Cronkite Enrichment Fund, which provides unrestricted dollars for the school's use.

It's especially significant when faculty members, like John Misner, support the school financially, said Lindsay Walker, director of development. Misner joined the Cronkite School in 2017 after a long career as a television news executive. He is a professor of practice and curator of the U.S. State Department Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship in Journalism. In addition, he serves as senior adviser to the dean and the ASU Foundation.

Misner has deep connections to ASU. He served as president of the Cronkite Endowment Board of Trustees from 2009-2013, endowed a scholarship at the school, earned his Bachelor of Liberal Studies degree from the university, and is the father of two Sun Devil sons.

"It just makes sense to consider giving gifts to the school so that we can expand our programs, whether it's projects, scholarships or anything that you personally have a passion for," Misner said. ■

To learn more about naming opportunities at the school, contact Lindsay Walker, director of development, at [lindsay.d.walker@asu.edu](mailto:lindsay.d.walker@asu.edu) or 602-496-5052.



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**“This school has the resources and connections to get you where you want to be.”**

**— Kamilah Williams,  
Cronkite graduate student**

Photo by Jenny Dupuis, ASU





### **Cronkite Enrichment Fund**

Gifts provide general support for the most pressing needs of the school. Contributions may supplement student scholarships, provide the most up-to-date reporting tools and technologies, cover travel for students covering important stories, bring renowned journalists and communications professionals as guest speakers or support a host of other student services and activities that make the Cronkite School so successful.

### **Journalism Scholarships**

Gifts have a direct impact on current students, making it possible for them to successfully complete their education. Gifts of any size can make a difference.

### **Program Support**

Support provides much-needed resources to grow and sustain many of the school's flagship opportunities.

### **Endowed Funds**

Gifts provide sustaining support for scholarships, chairs and professorships. The income generated by these funds strengthens our programmatic core, enabling the Cronkite School to attract and retain top students and faculty. Named funds may be established to recognize and honor friends, family members, former professors, colleagues and mentors, or simply to provide support for the Cronkite School for years to come. A minimum of \$25,000, which can be paid over a term of years, will establish an endowment in perpetuity.

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It is easy to include a gift to the Cronkite School in your will or living trust. A simple provision or amendment prepared by your attorney at the time you make or update your will or trust is all that is necessary. Gifts included in wills and living trusts are popular because they are flexible, easy to arrange and may be changed with your life circumstances.

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