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# Inside Journalism

Columbia College Chicago

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NOVEMBER

# INSIDE JOURNALISM

1995

A Newsletter Published by the Journalism Department of Columbia College

## J-STUDENT MEETS OLYMPIC GOLD MEDALIST

She has been described as a dedicated student and a hard working journalist. She has served as editor in chief of the Columbia Chronicle and now serves as articles editor for Chicago Arts and Communication. Last May she was named the United Way's Vision of Hope. She is Michel Schwartz and on October 16 she had the honor of appearing with Olympic decathlon gold medalist Bruce Jenner at the 1995 United Way Campaign Champions kick-off event for

Motorola.

Jenner motivated the employees of Motorola into accepting the task of raising \$2 million over a two week campaign period. Last year, Motorola collected nearly \$1.8 million for United Way during the same period of time.

Due to personal problems in her early teenage years, Michel left home and sought the help of the Jewish Children's Bureau, a United Way funded organization. It was through this agency that she found the financial and emotional support she needed to help her achieve her goals and put her on the road to success. "Many times in my life I thought I would end up on the streets. But now, at

age 21, I've got all my dreams tightly enclosed in my fist, thanks to United Way and the Jewish Children's Bureau," Schwartz says.

Schwartz also attributes her good fortune to the generosity of the Columbia College j-department. "The department let a 19-year-old kid become an editor and prove herself. Now I'm prepared for leadership, thanks to the department," Schwartz says. It was because of her achievements that United Way chose her to be the spokesperson for its Visions of Hope campaign. "I see this as a way to connect United Way and Columbia," says Schwartz regarding her new role.

Schwartz revealed, in her address to the top executives of Motorola, the hardships of growing up in group homes. "While in high school," she told the crowd, "it was difficult to realize that most of my peers went home to two parents and maybe a couple of siblings while I went home to nine or ten child care workers and eight 'sisters.' I constantly felt a lack of connection." She later exclaimed that she found her true family in her friends at Columbia.

Schwartz managed to impress her audience so much that she left the event with two public relations job prospects. Michel Schwartz has proven herself as a survivor time and time again, and now it is all paying off as she goes for the gold.

—Jennifer Laboy



Bruce Jenner and Michel Schwartz at the 1995 United Way Campaign of Champions Kick-off event for Motorola.



## Job Search

You're in school and you're halfway through the semester—swimming in class assignments, library research, and pop quizzes. Hang on a minute.

Take a mid-semester breather. Recall why you're knee-deep in a journalism major: You have the goal—or perhaps just a vague notion—of becoming a journalist. Your responses to the following 10 statements can show how far you've come, and how far you've left to go, in preparing for a journalism job search.

### Circle your answers:

1. I am saving all my best samples of writing, editing, designing, etc. Yes No
2. I've done a successful internship. Yes No
3. I know what kind of work I do well, and what kind not so well. Yes No
4. I am attending gatherings of professional journalism associations. Yes No
5. I keep at least three of my professional references updated on my life. Yes No
6. I know what job I'll be qualified for when I graduate. Yes No
7. I'm considering moving to another city for my first job. Yes No
8. I can name 10 employers who could reasonably hire me. Yes No
9. I know how to perform well in a job interview. Yes No
10. I've written a detailed resume and know how to write a cover letter. Yes No

Now, tally how many times you answered "Yes." If you answered "Yes," 9 to 10 times: Wow, have I got some job leads for you!

6 to 8: Could you fill in a few of the gaps over the holidays?

3 to 5: Doing a few informational interviews could inspire you.

Zero to 2: Let's talk.

The activities listed from 1 to 10 are the fundamentals of a typical journalism job search, and it's never too early to start preparing for the search. It's never too late, either.

*(Paula is the j-department's career advisor. Seek her out in the Career Planning & Placement Office, Wabash Suite 300, Ext. 5284.)*

## MAGAZINE MAINTAINS ITS REPUTATION

Susan Naese's goal for the 1996 *Chicago Arts and Communication* magazine is that it stand up to the reputation the magazine has achieved over the past several years.

The 1995 edition of the magazine was just awarded the national Mark of Excellence from the Society of Professional Journalist. As editor-in-chief of the magazine, this makes Naese's goal even more challenging.

Throughout the magazine's five year history, it has collected nine awards. These include three Silver Crown Certificates from the Columbia Scholastic Press Association, a National Pacemaker Award from the Associated College Press and a first and second place award for a single issue magazine from the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications.

According to Don Gold, director of the magazine program and faculty advisor for the publication, CAC's success can be credited to the students. "The class is a case study in cooperation," he says. "The students cooperate to achieve the objective of the class, which is the magazine."

The topics of this year's winning publication ranged from fashion, to being a Native American in Chicago, to drag performers, to local radio station WGCI. The magazine deals with the subjects taught at Columbia College as they are practiced in Chicago. "I want a professional publication," Gold states, "not a college publication" which would deal exclusively with on-campus subjects.

In addition to the excellent journalism in the magazine, Gold was also pleased with the magazine's layout. CAC was designed by journalism students in the class, Design for Editors, taught by Cathy Zaccarine. This was new for the magazine. In previous years the design had been handled by the art department.

Naese says, "We aren't in it for the awards. I hope the quality of this year's magazine will be the same, but of course I would like to surpass the others."

— Diane J. Bell

## GLIMMER OF HOPE FOR J-MAJORS

Graduates of journalism programs across the country in 1994 found jobs at an increased rate and at higher salaries. These findings by the Annual Survey of Journalism at Ohio State University are welcome news to most aspiring journalists.

Upon 1994 graduation seven of ten journalism majors had at least one job offer and almost 45 percent had two. Not only were journalism majors finding jobs at higher pay but, perhaps more importantly, they were more likely to find that job within the journalism field. Those who found jobs in the newspaper industry made up for more than nine percent, television and radio followed with slightly over eight percent combined, advertising agencies and departments of companies finished with 5.4 percent, and public relations agencies continued a decline over the past few years to 5.3 percent.

These graduates made nearly \$1500 more than the previous year's graduates and also enjoyed better benefits. The median salary for 1994 bachelor degree journalism graduates was an even \$20,000 six to eight months after the completion of their degrees. This significant eight percent increase in salary from the previous year helped to partially close the gap to \$5000 between those who graduated with bachelor degrees and those who completed their master's degrees in journalism.

Those who received their master's degree in journalism in the spring of 1994 did not do as well. They were actually less likely to have a job offer upon graduation. In fact, under 66 percent didn't have a job offer, which was a drop of nearly two percent from the previous year.

The positive aspects of the 1994 results may seem greater when examining anticipated negative results for 1995. News that there will be a merger between the *Journal* and the *Sentinel* in Milwaukee, the closures of the *Houston Post*, the *Evening Bulletin* in

Providence, the *Baltimore Sun*, and *New York Newsday*, and the elimination of 1,000 jobs at the Times-Mirror Company newspapers will almost surely have a negative impact on 1995 results of this annual study.

It is no secret that the journalism field is both highly competitive and tough. But Oliver R. Witte, a part-time journalism instructor at Columbia, assures us that, "Constant dedication, respect and appreciation for the field of journalism will eventually be appreciated by those you hope to be appreciated by." Let us all pray.

—David Kamish

## BIGNESS MAKES IT BIG

What do you think you would do on your first day at *The Wall Street Journal*? Chase leads on the biggest stories of the day, rewrite and edit for hours, perfecting your first story or spend eight hours filling out employment and health forms like John Bigness? John, a Journalism Department alumnus, is now a reporter for the Dallas Bureau of *The Wall Street Journal* covering the travel beat.

John, a June 1995 graduate, was a columnist for *The Chronicle*. In the fall of 1994, he interned with Pam Zeckman at WBBM-TV.

"Pam is one of the best investigative reporters in the business. It was fascinating to see her do her thing. She is an amazing person," John says. He feels this way about her because of how thoroughly she goes over every detail of her stories.

While doing that internship, he sent out clips to fifty daily newspapers. Of those, only *The Journal* responded.

"I never thought I'd only hear back from *The Journal*," he says, and with that he landed an internship at the Detroit Bureau of *The Wall Street Journal*. While there he met Robert Simison, the Detroit Bureau Chief.

"After my internship in Detroit, I was invited to New York on a fish-

ing trip to meet the editors of *The Journal*," says John. He was there for two days and instead of coming back to Chicago after the trip, he went straight to Dallas to interview for an opening at *The Journal*. "That's cool," was his reaction.

Ironically, Robert Simison had told John he had "zero chance" of getting a job out of his internship. The reason is that *The Journal* rarely hires interns.

Although John said nothing can prepare you for working at *The Journal*, he acknowledged that Carolyn Hulse's Senior Seminar class, Steve Franklin's Interpretive Reporting class and Dale Eastman's Feature Writing class have helped him the most for his experience at the paper.

John had only a couple of complaints about his move to Dallas. He misses his wife Evelyn and his son Sean. They had to stay behind a couple of weeks before they could go down. The other gripe: "They make fun of my Chicago accent."

—Robert Stevenson

## EVERYBODY LOVES A GOOD ROAST

The Chicago Association of Black Journalists hosted its first "Celebrity Roast" on September 30. The honorees were Diann Burns, news anchor for WLS-TV



Diann Burns

and Doug Banks, a disc jockey for radio station WGCI.

The purpose of the Roast was to raise funds for the 1997 National Association of Black Journalists Convention to be held in Chicago.

The event attracted a large number of broadcast, print, and radio celebrities including Renee Ferguson of WMAQ-TV Channel 5 and Bonnie DeShong of WVAZ 103 FM.

The evening began with a cocktail reception followed by a welcome address from the President of the CABJ, Warner Saunders. Damon Williams of All Jokes Aside Comedy Club was the Master of Ceremonies.

As the evening progressed, the atmosphere was filled with laughter as roasters began their humorous assault on the honorees.

"Of all the roasters, Renee Ferguson was, surprisingly, the funniest," said Burns. "She is usually so serious."

Ferguson reminisced about when Burns first came to Chicago from Cleveland. "Diann didn't know nothing. She thought Cabrini Green was a shade of eye shadow."

The tone of the evening became one of admiration as the audience listened to Burns' achievements. Among others, she was the first African-American to anchor the 10 o'clock news on Channel 7.

Grethia Hightower, a CABJ board member and Columbia College administrator, stated that the choice of Banks and Burns together was simply because "they are both number one in their chosen fields."

According to Kevin Morrow, a 1995 Columbia graduate who attended the roast, "Tonight was very special. A lot of celebrities and news people were gathered... and to finally meet them in person was an honor and privilege."

The CABJ is planning a "Celebrity Roast 2" for some time in January.

—Carmelita Nourse

## J-PUBS GO ON INTERNET

"It's just the next step in electronic publishing," says Omar Castillo.

Castillo, computer technician and desktop publishing instructor in the journalism department, is responsible for making two of Columbia's publications available on the Internet.

This newsletter and the student newspaper, *The Chronicle*, are now available through a college Internet system. By making the publications available on the Internet, readership will increase considerably. In 1994 the Internet provided access to 20 to 30 million computer users in over 140 countries.

The copyrighted material will be downloaded into the college Internet system by electronic transfer. It will be an exact replica of the printed version, says Castillo, except available via computer. In order to gain access to the publications, one must simply log onto an Internet service provider such as CompuServe, America On-Line or Prodigy.

The Internet evolved out of a government experiment aimed at creating a nationwide disaster-proof computer system that would allow scientists and military personnel to share information regardless of where they were. The experiment, conducted in the late 1960s, involved only four computers networked in California and Utah.

Because of its extensive expansion, the Internet is described in PC Magazine as "a loose collection of millions of computers at thousands of sites around the world..."

Castillo, who is a graduate of Columbia and has been a full-time staff member for two years, emphasizes that the Internet is important to students because it allows them to have a wider access to information to do research and to get interviews.

Wider access translates into a

larger readership for Nancy Laichas, editor of *The Chronicle*, who is ecstatic.

"Putting *The Chronicle* on the Internet," Laichas says, "positions Columbia on the cutting edge of what's going on in technology today. It's the wave of the future. And it shows incoming journalism students that Columbia has just as much to offer as any other institution of higher education."

When Laichas was asked if she felt any added pressure because the newspaper would now be available to so many to read, she responded, "The larger readership will give us more feedback. But because we already place such high standards in producing a clean, quality paper there is no added pressure. We're just a little more conscious of it all."

—Courtney Skipper-Reynolds

### INSIDE JOURNALISM

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