2017 CLASS OF SNOWDEN JOURNALISM INTERNS

Impressions, Lessons, and Reflections
The University of Oregon School of Journalism and Communication works closely with media organizations throughout Oregon. Each media partner invests in its own Snowden intern by creating a supportive learning environment in its newsroom and paying half of the intern’s stipend. The Charles Snowden Program for Excellence in Journalism endowment covers all remaining costs.

During the 10-week program, Snowden interns learn what it takes to work in a professional setting. Whether they’re covering beats ranging from sports to City Hall, taking photos, shooting video, or recording audio, students produce exceptional work that is often featured on front pages, websites, and radio broadcasts and picked up by the Associated Press.

In 1998, the family of Charles and Julie Snowden initiated the program in Charles’s memory. Charles had served as an editor at the Oregonian and the Oregon Journal. Since its inception, 254 students from 15 Oregon colleges have been awarded internships at 26 news organizations around the state. The program is open to student journalists at all Oregon colleges and universities. An average of 80 percent of Snowden interns gain full-time employment in news media after completing their university degrees.

Charles Snowden Program for Excellence in Journalism

2017 Snowden Interns

Kaylee Domzalski
Andy Tsubasa Field
August Frank
Rhianna Gelhart
Isaac Gibson
Emily Goodykoontz
Cooper Green
Aliya Hall
Angelina Hess
Clara Howell
Hannah Jones
Derek Maiolo
Franziska Monahan
Kaela Neal
Trân Nguyên
Emily Olson
Rachel Rippeote
Hannah Steinkopf-Frank

University of Oregon
University of Oregon
University of Oregon
University of Oregon
University of Oregon
Linn-Benton CC and University of Oregon
University of Oregon
University of Oregon
University of Oregon
University of Oregon
Southern Oregon University
University of Oregon
Linfield College
University of Oregon
University of Oregon
University of Portland
University of Oregon

Oregon Public Broadcasting
Roseburg News-Review
Eugene Register-Guard
Eugene Register-Guard
Baker City Herald
Forest Grove News-Times and Hillsboro Tribune
Salem Statesman Journal
Salem Capital Press
1859 Magazine/Statehood Media
Gresham Outlook
McMinnville News-Register
Eugene Register-Guard
KLCC 89.7 FM
Daily Astorian
Medford Mail Tribune
Pendleton East Oregonian
Eugene Register-Guard
Klamath Falls Herald and News
Kaylee Domzalski
University of Oregon
Oregon Public Broadcasting

Kaylee approached the internship as a true job. The scenecritique she demonstrated in her work relationships and finding opportunities to contribute was impressive. She is definitely ready for a full-time professional position.

I’ve been impressed by Kaylee’s motivation and confidence in her digital media work. She approaches every project like a true job and is a quick study and self-motivated learner when technical questions arise. She is a strong story teller and has evolved into a digital media professional. I’ve seen Kaylee transform from a student who approached video producers to a professional who performs her own work. She has mastered digital media and understands the importance of storytelling across different platforms.

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When The Register Guard sent me out on assignment to Dexter Lake for dragon boat races, I found myself sitting on the banks, waiting for the races to begin. I watched swallows swooping down near the lake's surface, and my eyes landed on a spot where a feather floated atop the water. I focused my camera there and waited. I snapped a few frames and ended up with picture of a swallow trying to eat a feather. I knew going into this internship that it would be my first experience of really doing journalism as it is in the real world. Day in day out. With no chance for do-overs or extensions. Not that the University of Oregon didn't give us much to do—assignments and instruction to take a photo of them in the studio, and instead I took them outside and turned them into a front-page image. The Snowden internship has given me knowledge to be able to continue in this industry. Most important, it has reminded me of the importance of serving the community. Sometimes, a great photo doesn’t need to be of one of a tragedy. Sometimes all it needs to be is a swallow trying to eat a feather.

This summer I experienced many aspects of newspaper journalism: competition, breaking news, features. I went out shooting on a day with no assignments and came back with a sunset picture of a heron snatching up its dinner. I had no assignments and came back with picture of a swallow trying to eat a feather. I was given some fake eclipse glasses with instructions to take a photo of them in the studio, and instead I took them outside and turned them into a front-page image. The Great American Eclipse. I could go on and on about what I consider to be a good photo, and I had never thought of the photos the person used for the city/region cover. About a week later, I received an email from a subscriber used for the city/region cover. About a week later, I received an email from a subscriber.

I thought it was a fine picture, and it was later used for the city/region cover. About a week later, I received an email from a subscriber. But in reading the email, I realized the importance of our role as journalists and was reminded of whom we serve: the community.

I had the high of finding a little-known event and coming back with a photo of an exploring kid, complete with butterfly net and broken arm. I had the low of getting a name wrong, and I learned from it. I proposed and then pursued a story about a solar eclipse. I had the low of getting a name wrong, and I learned from it. I proposed and then pursued a story about a solar eclipse. I had no assignments and came back with picture of a swallow trying to eat a feather.

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One thing I love about being a journalist is the knowledge to be able to continue in this industry. Most important, it has reminded me of the importance of serving the community. Sometimes, a great photo doesn’t need to be of one of a tragedy. Sometimes all it needs to be is a swallow trying to eat a feather.

I challenged August Frank to come up with his own ideas for his stories, and he succeeded beyond my expectations. I very much enjoyed working with him this summer.

—Chris Pietsch, Director of Photography and Multimedia, Eugene Register Guard

I got to meet my Eugene Pro Rodeo on one weekend and my Oregon Country Fair the next. I was able to learn a little bit about different walks of life. In my short time at University of Oregon, I learned a lot about different walks of life. In my short time at University of Oregon, I learned a lot about different walks of life.

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It pains me to write this reflection on my time at the Baker City Herald because I do not want this time to end. On my first day of work, I knew my job was going to be a challenge. I came in as someone who did not look, act, or dress like a local, and I was dropped into a tight-knit community with a distrust of media to an extent. I knew that I was going to have to work to make a name for myself to get people to trust me. Though the work was difficult, when the day was over, I felt satisfied when I got back home and took my shoes off, knowing that I was doing something important. There is only so much a classroom and a couple of unpublished reporting assignments can teach you about being a journalist, and I have learned more about the craft in these 10 weeks than I have in a year of school. This includes figuring out what questions to ask the county commissioner after a meeting is over and never being afraid to ask the editor to find sure to get all the meticulous details right, even at the risk of looking uninformed. This cannot be stressed enough, and it can be hard to keep yourself from being run by the editor—his work was also of the high quality that I've come to expect from Snowden interns. And the Herald editor would love to be burdened with. He was finishing his last week at the Baker City Herald and was sitting in front of a blank screen trying to write a story about a powerline that has been in the process of being built for the past 10 years. It's throwing yourself into a subject you know nothing about and coming out the other end with your truths and sometimes setting aside your own. It's listening to people. It's opening yourself to signs in the sky, signs you find only if you're looking for them, the further the story unfurled. I discovered a new power—a contribution I could make toward the documentation and the unfolding of a place's history. The everyday stories matter.

Community journalism isn't the slow crafting of sentences into a great literary piece, and it isn't just stringing words together in a rush to hit a deadline (though quality and speed are key). It's listening to people. It's opening yourself to signs in the sky, signs you find only if you're looking for them, the further the story unfurled. I discovered a new power—a contribution I could make toward the documentation and the unfolding of a place's history. The everyday stories matter.

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Go into someone's home. Stay awhile. Sit on their back porch at dusk while their cows snort and graze in the field below. See their eyes wrinkle while they tell you a story. Once I was sitting in a coffee shop, listening to a couple lay open their experiences as foster parents in Washington County. They entrusted me with their story, and I held it with shaking fingers, honored and terrified I couldn't give them what they needed—some sort of justice. It hit me, then—this was it. I couldn't give them justice. But I could make their voices be known. I began to investigate the local foster system, fact-checking tangents of personal stories against cryptic child welfare data. The deeper I looked, the further the story unfurled. Community journalism isn't just about feeling good FEATURES or town event coverage and community meetings. Community journalism is doing just this—listening to a perspective from somebody unexpected and following leads like signs in the sky you find only if you're looking for them, the further the story unfurled. It's holding somebody's story in your hands, reaching for the truth of it, and offering it to the world.

There is no way to overestimate the contributions Emily Goodykoontz made to our newsroom this summer. Emily has been writing stories for us—and for the Linn-Benton community—since she was a baby. Emily was born running, joy-loving manner has enhanced our limited her秉承的传统。作为一个人和一个普通新闻记者，她怀着一种认真和一种细心——一种将贡献给她的父母，拳拳之心，她需要寻求到其父母的热烈欢迎或支持。
Cooper Green
University of Oregon
Salem Statesman Journal

Cooper arrived here already a mature and confident journalist. But it was his insatiable curiosity and versatility that made him stand out from previous interns. He effectively worked with two different editors, producing a broad sweep of stories, from a teenager training sheep for the state fair to a large commercial fire to political campaign finance.

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After my first week at the newspaper, I could see why. I had known that agriculture is an important aspect of the Oregon economy, but it wasn’t until I started writing stories for and about farmers that it dawned on me exactly how important it is. As I learned while writing how devastating this was for the rancher who lost his animals, but potentially for others in the community. The algae could have had disastrous effects if no one was warned about it. It meant a lot to me that in sharing this story, I helped other ranchers keep their animals safe.

My first story was on grass seed growers deciding not to field burn during the eclipse. The managing editor’s edits and suggestions provided that opportunity. In 10 weeks, I had a chance to familiarize myself with a local newsroom. And I also came to better understand the business pressures that such newsrooms can face. That experience sparked my interest in the angle of agriculture, and I understood the impact of each connection. Now when I tell people about my internship, I’m more like my dad—not excited not only about having one, but about where I had one: at the Capital Press.

The story that stuck with me is one for which I was most recognized by sources: a piece on the discovery of a blue-green algae bloom in Southern Oregon that killed 32 cattle. I learned while writing how devastating this was not only for the rancher who lost his animals, but potentially for others in the community.

That said, it did take a couple stories for me to get used to my audience. That felt better than just about any award I could win. When I told my dad that I was a 2017 Snowden intern working at the Capital Press, the “West’s Weekly Agricultural Publication,” it seemed like he was more excited about the publication I was working for than the fact I received an internship.

As I learned about the changes in the food processing industry, kosher certification, technological advancements in agricultural teaching, lab-cultured meat, and toxic weeds and grasses. I eventually got the hang of it, writing stories that my audience would tell me so. Being at a local paper is wonderful. It may not be able to otherwise.

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At least every other week this summer at the Statesman Journal, I wrote a story that really mattered to at least one person, enough that they would tell me so. Being at a local paper provided that opportunity.

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Aliya Hall
University of Oregon
Salem Capital Press

It’s been a pleasure to have Aliya in the Capital Press newsroom. She was regularly the first reporter at her desk each morning. Aliya is enthusiastic and in good humor; she displays a work ethic that any employer will appreciate. She quickly became an integral part of our organization.

Aliya came prepared with a handful of story ideas she had already researched. Her family’s connection to agriculture certainly was a plus, but she was able to do so on her own interests to develop compelling story ideas. She was an active participant in our daily story conferences. It seems sometimes that she seizes fly by too quickly. That is certainly the case this year. Aliya will be missed.

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—Joe Beach, Editor and Publisher, Capital Press
The plan was to hit the dusty back roads to childhood camping destinations in the Pacific Northwest while simultaneously seeking the best eateries and playtime havens, capturing the scene below. Watching bulky men throw 90-pound rocks and run across a log with chainsaws wouldn’t have been my typical Saturday before I started working as a reporter with the Gresham Outlook. But attending events like these and making the quirks I loved about the communities I covered.

I am beyond grateful for my time in Bend with a staff that works so diligently, innovatively, and collaboratively. Despite my car problems, a missed flight, Greyhound or two, and even a concussion, they were there for me every step of the way.

I could not have done this work without the amazing staff I was placed with—more like a family I was accepted into. My fellow reporters and editors helped me to improve my craft. Their support, advice, and constructive criticism helped me grow as a person both in and outside of the newsroom. What we as journalists do matters. Newspapers and coverage matter to people. What we as journalists do matters. What is important to them has become important to the people there. Ilearned—especially important in today’s society—to never forget that.

My fellow reporters and editors helped me to improve my craft. Their support, advice, and constructive criticism helped me grow as a person both in and outside of the newsroom. Everything I learned and the firsts I experienced—covering breaking news and events; writing features, anniversary and death notices, and news briefs; and photographing events—are things I will carry with me. I’ll apply the valuable skills I honed during this program wherever I go.

The encouragement and trust I was shown during my time with the Gresham Outlook’s Newsroom helped me to move forward to in my future work, I can’t wait to get to work. Watching bulky men throw 90-pound rocks and run across a log with chainsaws wouldn’t have been my typical Saturday before I started working as a reporter with the Gresham Outlook. But attending events like these and making the quirks I loved about the communities I covered.

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The first few days of my internship felt like I was learning how to be a journalist again. I was in a city I had never been to, tasked with making connections with community members in the short time I had.

The first story I covered was a city council meeting in the small town of Carlton, and I wrote that night about how desperately the town needed to improve its roads. A few weeks later, residents brought my story up to their representatives because they wondered when they would see the money from a major transportation bill. This was incredibly gratifying. My stories were promoting the town needed to improve its roads. A meeting in the small town of Carlton, and I wrote that night about how desperately the town needed to improve its roads. A few weeks later, residents brought my story up to their representatives because they wondered when they would see the money from a major transportation bill. This was incredibly gratifying. My stories were promoting

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When I began at KLCC as a volunteer reporter last October, I almost had second thoughts about whether or not I should be doing radio. When my scripts were edited, nearly every sentence I wrote was wrong, and when I voiced my pieces, they never turned out the way they had sounded in my head. Even the vowels I left for sources were lazy.

I had known upon entering my first professional radio experience that there was a lot I didn’t know yet. I just didn’t realize how much.

I continued to learn about reporting and writing for radio from the passionate, thoughtful, and generally incredible staff at KLCC throughout my last year of school and this summer as a Snowden intern. Through Snowden, I got to do almost everything there is to do as a reporter at KLCC. I covered stories near and dear to the KLCC community, such as the Oregon Country Fair. I covered stories near and dear to me personally, too, such as the Astoria Timbers soccer team. I covered stories near and dear to the Eugene community, such as the story of a man who unknowingly left for Astoria.

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I drove the narrow, windy road up Highway 66 to a small town 50 minutes from Ashland, Oregon. A small, one-story building stood, isolated, amid the hills and trees of Southern Oregon.

Inside, 16 kids ranging from ages 4 to 10 huddled in a circle. One was helping her mom, who was demonstrating a machine that connects with a trash in the little girl’s neck to help with her breathing. Her schoolmates let out some “oohs” and “ahhs” when her hands felt the air pressure from the machine.
Pinehurst School District has only one school. The superintendent is also the school board’s chairman, the school’s foundation treasurer becomes a nurse if a kid falls from the slide. Its whole staff is made up of parents and grandparents. This year, the school has 16 children enrolled.

Despite all ads, Pinehurst rang its bell for the 109th first day of school this September. The school, perched on a 100-degree day, was totally new, and I’d need her help to identify what was important about this year’s fair.

During my internship at the Mail Tribune, I wrote about a neuropsychiatrist crowned as Ms. Oregon Senior, a country music festival that drew a crowd larger than the population of the town it was located in, delivery weed terms into it, but at the time, I felt completely lost. My Southern California upbringing meant the fairgrounds on a 100-degree day, were as foreign as Greek.

I’m a perfectionist in my panic, feeling like I’d failed my reporting assignment—and my editor and the paper and the community. But as I drove back to the office, it dawned on me that I’d missed a great opportunity.

The next morning, I marched into my editor’s office with a smile and a confession: I was feeling like I’d failed my reporting assignment—and my editor and the paper and the community. But as I drove back to the office, it dawned on me that I’d missed a great opportunity.

Emily has an innate interest in the people around her and is dedicated to understanding them and meeting their needs through journalism. As fundamental as that sounds, it is missing from what we all do in the media. She puts hours of effort into making connections with both sources and readers, and the work that developed from it in depth and meaningful. She will be able to take that drive out into any corner of the field and restore peoples’ trust in the profession.

And look,” I said, kicking my leg above her desk to reveal an old red tennis shoe. “I brought proper footwear.

Either way, it requires you to put aside your own discomfort and do what’s necessary to serve your community. Even if that means changing your shoes, getting out there, and thinking critically about what you know matters. Often, it requires you to admit you know nothing and then work tirelessly to figure it out.

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That’s how I feel about community journalism. It’s truly a public service. It’s not about the views or the shares or the high profile story—community reporters are the ones who paint the background details in the big picture.

They were drenched in dust and suffocating my toes, but it wasn’t until the woman looked down that I realized my black oxford loafers were totally inappropriate footwear.

And while I spent the summer reporting on heavier topics—the failing health of local senior centers, a controversial city council decision, a group of at-risk teenagers who commandeered a gas station parking lot—I couldn’t stop thinking about what I learned from a story on the county fair.

Being a good community journalist takes a certain balance of confidence and humility. It’s more than just reporting with accuracy, writing clean copy, and thinking strategically.

Trân Nguyên
University of Oregon
Medford Mail Tribune

Emily Olson
University of Oregon
Pendleton East Oregonian

Trân has been a great help to the newsroom—so much so that we’re keeping her on for another few months. She’s eager to learn, easy to work with, and a thorough reporter with a good eye for detail and organization—another great example of the quality of interns who come out of the Snowden program.

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—Cathy Novak, Editor, Medford Mail Tribune

—Daniel Wattenburger, Managing Editor, Pendleton East Oregonian

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Daniel Wattenburger, Managing Editor, Pendleton East Oregonian
Rachel Rippetoe
University of Portland
Eugene Register-Guard

During the last few weeks of my internship at The Register Guard, I debated how to leave a letter in the mailbox of an alleged meth dealer, investigated dead animal carcasses, and listened to a woman cry as she told me about the day she lost her baby.

As a news and business intern, I wasn’t rewriting press releases. Whether it was a house fire, a Sunday event, or walking into the home of a stranger, I was always almost in the thick of it.

I also began to understand the importance of community journalism. In a recent piece in the Columbian Journalism Review, reporter Julia Dahl said something about sources that struck a chord with me: “You have tremendous power over their lives, but no access to the real details of their humanity.”

I had access, loads of it.

I sat in the home of a family whose son had a lifesaving skull surgery. His mother turned up as she told how hard it was to come up with the money to save him. I got an up-close look at his white lightning bolt scar as he and his siblings ran around with squirt guns and laughed. I could trust to write all the things that I heard.

Good stories sneak up on you. They tap you on the shoulder from behind while you’re looking around somewhere else. But only if you’re there to listen. Community journalism puts you there.

I wrote about the local algae that is harvested for valuable protein. I also wrote about the local algae that is harvested for valuable protein. I also wrote about the local algae that is harvested for valuable protein. I also wrote about the local algae that is harvested for valuable protein.

Earlier this summer, as I was disheartened learning about growing mistrust in media and reading tweets about “fake news,” I received an interesting letter in the mail. It was a pink, glittery thank-you letter from the jury coordinator at the Klamath County court. I was shocked that anyone would take the time to write such a thing. But only if you’re there to listen.

I went door to door on a street on which a homicide had occurred. Knocking and hoping that the residents had known the victim who was allegedly shot. I left little notes ripped out of my reporter’s notebook outside their doors.

I sat across a picnic table from a woman who lives in a home that’s 64 square feet. Before then, she had lived out of her car. She showed me around Opportunity Village, a community for those who can’t afford housing. She spoke with utter positivity about her life and the work it requires. I realized that, after living in rural Southern Oregon, I had never realized the significance my work could have until I lived in rural Southern Oregon.

Most of what I knew about Klamath Falls came from Hannah Steinkopf-Frank whose columns always included the town being “backwards” with nothing going on. From my first week at the newspaper, though, I learned there was a wide variety of diverse local stories waiting to be covered. Many of them carried national importance.

I wrote about the local algae that is harvested and sold internationally, about a cancer patient whose blog reaches hundreds of thousands of people, and about a proposed pipeline that, if approved, could be the country’s next Standing Rock.

I also learned the impact my articles could have: Writing a negative food review could severely affect a restaurant, and when the accomplishments of “unsung heroes” were recognized by the paper, those people felt so much gratitude.

In addition, during a time of political and cultural division, I was moved by reading tweets about “fake news,” I received an interesting letter in the mail. It was a pink, glittery thank-you letter from the jury coordinator at the Klamath County court. I was shocked that anyone would take the time to write such a thing. But only if you’re there to listen.

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Like our interns, the Charles Snowden Program for Excellence in Journalism has unlimited potential and depends on private support for maintenance and growth. To learn more about how you can make a tax-deductible contribution to this nationally recognized program, contact the University of Oregon School of Journalism and Communication Office of Development at 541-346-3687.

You can also make a gift via check made payable to the UO Foundation.
In the memo line include: School of Journalism and Communication—Snowden Program.

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