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2015 Stories Campaign Judging: Pick Your Top 7.

Goal: Find the best entries reflect the contest: Please tell us your story about how NewsU has transformed you.

Entry 1	<p>Although I've always liked writing, I emerged from high school and elected to pursue an education in different field. As I matured and gained confidence, I finally decided to follow my desire to write. Without much time or money to go back to college for a writing program, I searched for reputable online writing courses. There are so many options for online learning, and I'm glad I found Poynter and NewsU.</p> <p>I really wanted to hone my skills and work on my storytelling. My career as a 911 telecommunicator emphasized brevity in getting information and concisely typing the details. NewsU helped me polish my writing and learn the craft better. I have found The Writer's Workbench: 50 Tools You Can Use course to be especially helpful. It is full of great tips and motivators. The concepts of using special effects and using words to make a blind person see have been inspiring.</p> <p>I appreciate NewsU for making quality-learning opportunities convenient and affordable. Since I am self-employed, I must use my time wisely. I must balance working with continuing education, perfecting my writing and keeping up-to-date. NewsU allows me to use my time effectively. I have truly enjoyed absorbing myself in the webinars and courses from Poynter's NewsU.</p> <p>Tiffany Cooper Freelance Writer <i>freelance</i></p>
Entry 2	<p>I first came to NewsU for the toxic cheese.</p> <p>I had seen the You Be a Reporter game at the Newseum in its original location in Arlington. I coveted that simulation for use with my reporting students. I asked whether it could somehow be made available to them; I sought out the creator to see whether there were others, to see how to create others. The take away: Proprietary and pricey.</p> <p>This was early on in the computerized, digital world. I did find a couple to use, though not as visual as Reporter's toxic cheese story. My favorite was the story of a man who cut down trees on protected land without a permit. When deadline time came, that one locked you out from any more gathering. You had to go with what you got. Believe me, that taught deadline much more effectively than my turning out the lights in the reporting lab and walking away.</p> <p>To me, the simulations were way better than the "fact sheets" generally used in teaching of news writing. The simulation got at concepts like source choices, the answers you get</p>

Poynter. NEWS UNIVERSITY

	<p>depending on the questions you ask, managing time wisely, going back to a source or trying again to reach someone unavailable, realizing that things are not as they seem. All excellent concepts for journalists to know about and think about.</p> <p>Then Poynter acquired You Be a Reporter and made it available online via NewsU. By then, to me, it seemed a little cheese-y frankly and immature for the students I was then teaching. But its foundation was still solid. I encouraged students to use it to reinforce reporting and gathering basics, to boost their confidence before going out on real stories. I rewarded them with extra credit. I also used it by way of introduction to Poynter and what services it has available for student and working journalists.</p> <p>NewsU has been good over the years in adding other activities and online seminars that can be used for reinforcement, practice and enrichment. I use it for myself to keep up to date, most recently learning about Videolicous and updates on media law as applied to blogging.</p> <p>As professionals, we can't all get to St. Pete for a seminar, or even to a conference or meeting regionally to help revive, re-energize and connect us. Certainly much is gained by being in the same room with folks, and I count among one of my best professional experiences a Storytelling seminar at Poynter in the company of Isabel Wilkerson and Roy Peter Clark among others.</p> <p>Like the Best Newspaper Writing collections and other efforts, NewsU extends the institute's reach. Online brings the learning to us, helps keep us up to date, connected, enlivened. NewsU has been a valued partner in my journalism teaching and in my own professional development. Just clicks away, I can find style and grammar practice, info on technical and reporting innovations, ethics discussions, gadget wizardry, and yes, the story of kids sickened after mac & cheese for lunch.</p> <p>Norma Parker Wilson Founder <i>Wayside Writers</i></p>
Entry 3	<p>For over four years, I have been a student involved with Communications. I have conducted interviews and surveys to capture an audience and enjoyed it very much. Not until I got into a bad accident December 2011, though, that I realized it was my purpose in life. I wanted to create an online community for artist where you see the globe and talents within. I bought the domain and began creating BELEGACY.com</p> <p>My passion is the Arts. Anything from music to design, dance and writing. I am so passionate about it that i express it on all social medias and have a big following. Going on eight years now, I have been a marketing advocate and have done very well. After the accident that rolled over my graduation gift of a car, I began to think how I can utilize that to help.</p> <p>I started using Poynter's NewsU at Florida International University as part of a course and</p>

Poynter. NEWS UNIVERSITY

	<p>immediately expanded my knowledge on media. I use the power of Communication every day as a marketing representative for Sears Holdings. but without this tool I would not have the direction on how to pursue putting my ideas to life. It aided with tips and tricks on handling equipment I had never used before. It provided stories and frameworks from experts. The guidelines and interactive courses helped me put projects together for not just my class but my site which I will launching once I graduate.</p> <p>It has influenced my status as a student and an entrepreneur. I am very appreciative of the fact I was directed to this helpful media and will continually learn since it also has a huge selection. My purpose as a mass communicator was illuminated by an intense circumstance, NewsU educated me even more on what I love and for that I am thankful.</p> <p>Ivanna Mijangos Sales Advocate <i>Sears Holdings</i></p>
Entry 4 ✱	<p>In 2005, Poynter and I were not acquainted. I was a college senior working in the editorial department of a nonprofit with a small and scattered but global and growing reach. Job titles were afterthoughts. If you had an aptitude, you got more responsibility than you could handle dropped in your lap and due by Friday.</p> <p>I remember where I was (near the kitchenette at my old teal Power Mac G4) when I thought, Somewhere, for some reason, someone has put an accessible and well-designed curriculum online for journalism training.</p> <p>I didn't know it, but Poynter had just created NewsU. We found each other before the year was out. It was exactly what I had imagined--and exactly what we had needed.</p> <p>We didn't have the time or resources to sift through traditional curricula to get the know-how we needed. We needed training that was specific and that worked. NewsU delivered: leads, interviewing, ethics, radio scripting, editing, typography, layout, alternative story forms. (Shout-outs go to: "Writing for the Ear," "Aim for the Heart," "Mario Garcia Master Class," and the "Headlines That Work" group seminar.)</p> <p>At our organization, we have expanded dramatically since 2005--new offices, new forms of media. NewsU has been incorporated into our college classes, intra-department training, and non-formal training. NewsU's 10 years have brought hundreds of courses on things we specifically need--and these days, there's nary a "Buffering" dialogue box to be found.</p> <p>For our organization, NewsU has been exactly what we needed, exactly when we needed it. We hope the next decade brings the same huge growth, for both our organizations.</p> <p>Philip Nice PCG News Managing Editor <i>PCG</i></p>

Poynter. NEWS UNIVERSITY

<p>Entry 5</p>	<p>In 2008 as a former legislator I was looking to stay active in politics and policy issues which are both complex and interesting. Starting out it was very difficult because there was an element that I hadn't even considered: the reader. It's one thing to write about a policy and legislation, but it's yet another to capture and keep a reading audience interested and engaged. This is where NewsU excels.</p> <p>Several courses later I'm now writing about complex issues of the day and keeping my readership levels high.</p> <p>Steven Connolly blogger <i>NHInsider.com</i></p>
<p>Entry 6</p>	<p>This is a common story to be told by many teachers. August 1 is the report date back for teachers and one reports with lesson plans methodically thought out for the entire year only to find that all the work completed for the new year over the summer can be burned in a pit of despair because one is not teaching anything that resembles the schedule given out on May. And so it goes, this is how I began teaching what is now my dream set of classes, journalism.</p> <p>But for Poynter, and NewsU, I do not think I would be able to say this though. As any teacher who is handed a set of classes her or she has never taught, and has 5 days to prepare, they set off to find quality help on the internet. Usually, a few months into the class, the internet is replaced by other means of instruction - but not so with NewsU.</p> <p>It is a clear, easy to access format, that not only engages my students, provides relevant easy to understand lessons - but the entire process of learning online is relevant for my students. The process of learning how to navigate the act of learning online is as important as what they are learning in the lesson.</p> <p>More than once I have advocated to my principals the need to use this program, and with only two years in to the field of journalism, we are now starting a Journalism Pathway in the Fine Arts Academy. Poynter and NewsU have provided the much needed guidance and consistency needed for my students. I can't see teaching without it.</p> <p>Susan Strasinger Journalism Adviser <i>Overton High School / Bobcat Beat</i></p>
<p>Entry 7</p>	<p>What I love about NewsU is the ability to get top-quality training without having to travel or attend expensive conferences. NewsU allows you to customize your experience to your needs, and it does it at an affordable price, so journalists looking to grow can do that even without the support of their newsroom budget.</p>

Poynter. NEWS UNIVERSITY

	<p>I have taken a number of NewsU classes designed to help me teach the next generation of journalists through the Sun Sentinel Media Group's teen journalism programs. I train a staff of writers and photographers from high schools throughout South Florida with the Teenlink program every year. I also teach workshops to young journalists outside of my program through school-based journalism events.</p> <p>The courses I took on the Building Blocks of News and Coaching Tomorrow's Journalists, as well as a webinar on the Future of Journalism Education, have contributed directly to my success.</p> <p>But I don't just use NewsU to teach teenagers. I also bring my training back to the newsroom. I've taken a courses on writing headlines for the web, using Google for audience engagement and more.</p> <p>I remember going into the vice president's office after participating in the webinar on the New Ethics of Journalism, amazed at the change from what I had been taught in school (non-biased, non-judgmental, all-parties-equal journalism). The new approach advocated newspapers as a responsible party in their communities with a charge to present an issue from a thought-out, clear viewpoint. We had such an inspiring discussion in her office that she asked me to present what I learned at the webinar to the senior editors in our newsroom.</p> <p>So my one hour of training went far beyond me, which is the true value of NewsU. None of it stops at my desk. Instead, the webinars and broadcasts are presented in a way that helps viewers to share what they have learned with the newsrooms and communities around them. In doing that, we are changing our worlds.</p> <p>Jennifer Jhon editor <i>Forum Publishing/Teenlink/South Florida Parenting</i></p>
Entry 8	<p>In 2012 I left my job as a small-town news editor for the unknown of Chicago and the freelance life. I was at a newspaper with a rudimentary website and a digital division that consisted of whatever time I chose to devote to it, and I needed to be in a place where people thought digital first.</p> <p>I learned by reading a lot and taking Poynter's Webinars and tutorials, but we had absolutely no time for internal training.</p> <p>I didn't think much of my digital knowledge when I left my hometown, but I soon found that what I had learned through experimentation, reading, and a lot of Poynter's articles and webinars actually put me well ahead of the pack of both journalists and social media pros.</p>


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	<p>Within a few months I was hired by a marketing firm as a content strategist, making significantly more than I ever did as a pure journalist, largely thanks to the jumpstart Poynter's gave me. After a little more than a year, I felt myself pulled to return to my love of storytelling (honest storytelling) and dove headlong back into freelancing, now with "Digital Media Consultant" added to my list of titles.</p> <p>I'm now under contract by my old paper to revamp their digital presence and train their staff on writing for the web, SEO, and multimedia strategy as we prepare to launch a new website.</p> <p>I still lean on the resource that first started me down this path and keeps me at the edge, Poynter's and NewsU.</p> <p>Myles Dannhausen Jr. Freelance Writer, Digital Media Consultant <i>Independent</i></p>
Entry 9	<p>We all have a voice, but understanding its power and fine tuning the sound? That takes practice. It is an art. And Keith Woods is a master teacher. As a columnist he helped me push myself to peel back the layers and truly write my heart out in a way that helps me nurture connectivity.</p> <p>My work has grown by the pound, winning awards and more importantly, reaching readers and more accurately representing the macro music in my micro message. It's an exercise in honesty and rhythm and words to use your voice properly. Thank you, NewsU for helping me come into my own.</p> <p>Jenee Osterheldt Lifestyle columnist <i>The Kansas City Star</i></p>
Entry 10	<p>Poynter's News University is our partner in a leadership development program we launched three years ago at the University of Georgia's Grady College of Journalism. When I approached Vicki Krueger about creating a hybrid training program as a student extracurricular activity, the idea lacked form and substance. But in only a few conversations, she guided us to a program that has emerged as one of our college's premier honors.</p> <p>Sponsored by the Cox Institute for Journalism Innovation, Management and Leadership, competitively-selected students are designated as Cox Poynter Leaders. They complete six online modules with News University and six live sessions taught by UGA faculty and industry guests to earn a Poynter certificate in media leadership. The students are presented their certificates at an end-of-program banquet, which this year featured Twitter's Mark Luckie as keynote speaker. With parents and faculty attending, the banquet has become a</p>

Poynter. NEWS UNIVERSITY

	<p>celebration of training young journalists to think positively about the future of journalism and to understand that journalism provides opportunities for young leaders.</p> <p>One student tweeted from this year's program that the evening was another reason why he was in the best major at the best university. The tweet underscored how important the program has become to the students we touch with it. Forty students have completed the training so far, and we hope to introduce its concepts of ethical and transformative leadership to many more before we're done.</p> <p>Without the resources of News University and Vicki's leadership, it would not have happened. Happy Anniversary, NewsU!</p> <p>Keith Herndon Visiting Professor of Journalism <i>University of Georgia</i></p>
Entry 11 *	<p>I hooked into NewsU in its very early days, and I have probably used it in all of its forms -- webinars, self-directed classes, live streams. While it wasn't what introduced me to the idea of personal professional development, it is the key means I've used to build my professional skills and the skills of others that I managed, counseled, taught, encouraged.</p> <p>When I became the trainer for my newsroom, it became a tool I used and recommended to the journalists I trained and coached. I was fortunate to be part of the Newsroom Trainers group that Poynter hosted. I found NewsU material useful for journalists who were just starting out to help boost their confidence, mid-level journalists who needed help assessing their skills and figuring out how to push to the next level and for experienced journalists who were working to refine their craft or willing to try new forms.</p> <p>When I became an adjunct at the local university, it became an invaluable tool for getting classes that had a variety of skill levels onto the same page, and for challenging my more advanced students.</p> <p>Personally, it has been a professional lifeline to dozens of colleagues and contacts around the country that have become friends, mentors, inspirations. When I've struggled to reach a journalist that needs improvement or a student who needs some extra help, NewsU has been my first source of aid.</p> <p>And, now that I work independently, I have found it invaluable for teaching me new skills, toning up skills I haven't used in a while and for reassurance and confidence that I have marketable skills. Thank you, NewsU!</p> <p>Rene Kaluza Freelance editor/adjunct <i>Several</i></p>

Poynter. NEWS UNIVERSITY

<p>Entry 12</p>	<p>Years ago when I first started teaching I took over a course called "Images of News" I knew that I wanted to add discussions about ethical issues and what makes a good, compelling image. This wasn't for a photography class. It was a class aimed at teaching a new generation of journalists who were being asked to take photos with "point and shoots" and (gasp!) cell phones who had no background in photography.</p> <p>In my search for materials I came across a course called "Language of the Image" on NewsU and immediately added it to my syllabus. It was perfect. Images, sound, interactivity.</p> <p>Over the past years at least one newsu.org course has been on my syllabus. In fact, it's usually more than one, meaning NewsU has been a core part of what and how I teach for years. Many thanks for this great resource. It's truly helping to shape the next generation of great journalists!</p> <p>Michelle Johnson Associate Professor <i>Boston University</i></p>
<p>Entry 13</p> 	<p>When I started out my career as an academic, I had years of experience as a print journalist in Reuters Cairo. So, initially, I had confidence that my experience and skills were sufficient to teach striving journalists how to do their job and do it well. Yet, what I didn't anticipate, was the fast change and development that swept the media environment, taking us from print or broadcast to multimedia reporting, graphics, animations, podcasts, etc.</p> <p>So, I found myself in a position where I had to learn to keep up to date with these developments, if I was to help prepare these striving journalists how to acquire the skills needed for such a competitive media market.</p> <p>This is where NewsU has been my savior. Through the online courses offered by NewsU, I was able to catch up on storytelling techniques and multimedia reporting. I was also able to gain more knowledge on media ethics and on beat reporting and diversity issues. These are all topics that are central in my classes. I have also required my students to enroll in various free courses offered by NewsU, which has helped them with grammar and style, writing basic news stories and multimedia reporting.</p> <p>NewsU has indeed strengthened my journalistic background and boosted my confidence in the classroom. It is through these online courses that I have slowly acquired the skills needed to teach diverse journalism courses and to make sure my courses cover everything from style to diversity to the multiple ways of telling a story.</p> <p>Nahed Eltantawy Associate Professor of Journalism <i>High Point University</i></p>


Poynter. NEWS UNIVERSITY

<p>Entry 14</p> <p>✓</p>	<p>For the 16+ years I have been here at the Wyoming Tribune Eagle, we have made monthly training in each part of our newsroom a top priority. Each manager is responsible for finding or preparing a training session for their staff.</p> <p>We love NewsU because it provides a variety of high-quality training opportunities at a very low cost. Like most newspapers, we would love to have the budget to send our staff members out of the building for training more often. But thankfully Poynter recognized this trend early and adapted with the creation of NewsU.</p> <p>For the past 10 years, we have used the self-directed courses and Webinars to bring experts to our staff with no more investment than a laptop computer, a projector and some speakers in a conference room. From "How to Use Detail in Your Writing" to "Managing Creative People," NewsU Webinars have helped grow, develop and shape the staff at the Tribune Eagle into better journalists, better managers and better colleagues.</p> <p>I can only imagine and shudder at the thought of how difficult it would have been in the past decade to meet our goal of quality monthly staff training sessions without NewsU.</p> <p>Here's to many more decades, Poynter! See you online!</p> <p>Brian Martin Managing Editor <i>Wyoming Tribune Eagle</i></p>
<p>Entry 15</p> <p>* * *</p>	<p>NewsU has been a friend on my journalism journey from rookie reporter to journalism instructor. As I transitioned from daily newspapers to the classroom, I used NewsU Webinars to supplement my knowledge about specialized reporting topics, innovative software and newsroom thinking.</p> <p>Now, NewsU course packs are a key part of the syllabi for courses I teach, and I watch the latest webinars to stay fresh on current apps and skills. The high-quality, free and low-cost webinars were a key reason I've twice gone in person to Poynter's Teachapalooza conference to learn from educators leaders how to teach better.</p> <p>In addition, I last year "attended" a NewsU month-long course on jQuery and Wordpress, which led directly to a job this semester running a student website.</p> <p>Without News U, I would be uninformed and unconnected.</p> <p>Kate Nash Cunningham journalism instructor <i>University of New Mexico</i></p>
<p>Entry 16</p> <p>* * *</p>	<p>"You went from green as a golf course to a full grown storyteller."</p>

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<p>17</p>	<p>That is what my first news director told me on my last day of my first job. NewsU helped hone my skills in questioning and writing. I may have landed my first job on a college reel, but I certainly jumped more than 50 markets learning from NewsU. Especially at a time when I needed to move closer to my hometown after losing my dad to brain cancer.</p> <p>Along with my father, NewsU taught me to write like I'm having a conversation with a viewer. And, when it comes down to it, the conversations we have with others in life matters most.</p> <p>Dave Marcheskie Managing Editor and Anchor of abc27 News Weekend WHTM-TV abc27</p>
<p>Entry 17</p>	<p>I didn't know anything about Poynter before I took the webinar "Writing Successful Profiles" from Jan Winburn in 2011. The caliber of the course impressed me. Jan packed reams of useful information into an hour and a half. She included both granular and grand suggestions for revealing a subject's essence.</p> <p>From my notes: "Never use dialogue to convey information. Instead use it to characterize, advance action, develop conflict, and foreshadow." "Everybody has a quest. Find it. Make it conversation. The quest becomes the thread of your story."</p> <p>I used one of her suggestions immediately while writing a story about two unsung Hawaiian musician/ inventors ("Use visual aids like scrapbooks and videos"). I interviewed their ninety-year-old brother, poring over old photographs and documents to gain great details about the boys' childhood.</p> <p>The story netted me my first professional accolade--an honorable mention in Arts & Entertainment writing from the Hawaii Publishers Association. The story has since been quoted in music history books.</p> <p>The profile writing webinar was so effective that it inspired me to take more courses and ultimately to travel to Florida for the week-long Secrets of Great Enterprising course at Poynter Institute. Studying alongside other top-rate working journalists was one of the best things I could have done for my career. I gained a deeper respect for my craft and left with too many practical tools to list. Best of all, I made friends with the instructors. I've since snagged many more large freelance features and a first place prize for a profile of extreme cyclists. So, thanks!</p> <p>Shannon Wianecki Writer <i>freelance</i></p>

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<p>Entry 18</p>	<p>Poynter has transformed my storytelling.</p> <p>The Webinars have given me the confidence to write tight and to video.</p> <p>I am not the smartest person, but I am a quick learner. Poynter is easy to use. I am the first to make it to high school and graduate from college in my home. When interviewed for my my first job, I made sure my stories on my demo had power verbs, inverted pyramid writing style and the 2-3-1 method. I have taken about 6 courses so far and loved all of them.</p> <p>I believe the workshops gave me the confidence and made me a better storyteller. I was able to prove that in my interview and landed my first job.</p> <p>Veronica Gallegos Reporter <i>Telemundo KVDA</i></p>
<p>Entry 19</p> 	<p>When I entered high school, not once did it occur to me that journalism was an area that I wanted to pursue. I was such an eager, but confused and awestruck freshman, completely overwhelmed by the sheer number of extracurriculars that were available. My entire first year of high school was spent trying to decide how I wanted to spend the next three years of my life. I considered choir, attended tennis camp, and even contemplated trying out for the color guard team. For some reason, though, none of those activities particularly stood out to me.</p> <p>Then, one of my close friends recommended that I join Baron Banner, a zero period class that focuses on print publication. Baron Banner produces the bimonthly Baron Banner newspaper, the Red magazine, as well as the online news website, BaronNews.</p> <p>I was skeptical. What did I know about journalism? Did I even like journalism? I had no clue how to write a news article, or any sort of article for that matter. I didn't have the faintest idea what a lead or the inverted pyramid was. After much contemplating, I finally decided to give it a shot, figuring that the teacher could always teach me what I needed to know.</p> <p>After I joined, though, I realized that Baron Banner is a very student-run class. Although there is an adviser, every aspect of publication, whether it be which articles to write or what photos to take, are entirely managed by the student staff members. Because there is no traditional arrangement of a teacher teaching the class, all first-year students are required to complete a series of NewsU lessons to gain a basis on journalistic writing.</p> <p>I recall being a first-year student two years ago, eagerly absorbing every single word of each lesson I completed, from Beat Basics to the Building Blocks of News. It was through these interesting and informative lessons that I gained a knowledge, as well as a budding passion for journalism. After learning what I could from NewsU, I was confident enough in myself to go out and write prolifically. From news stories, to features, to opinions, I used what knowledge I had obtained from NewsU to write these articles to the best of my abilities.</p>

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	<p>Flash forward two years, and I am no longer a timid first-year staff writer. Over the years, I have become more dedicated and passionate about Baron Banner than I ever thought I would be. I have become the editor-in-chief, and am now able to watch my own staff members start at square one and slowly become aspiring journalists with the help of NewsU lessons. I was able to find the niche that little freshman me had so desperately wanted to find - and it was all thanks to NewsU.</p> <p>Karen Trinh Editor-in-Chief <i>Baron Banner - Fountain Valley High School</i></p>
<p>Entry 20 ✳</p>	<p>Growing up in Egypt, kids grow up wanting to be one of two things, a doctor or an engineer. But these two options were never on my list as parents or family member playfully asked me what I wanted to be when I grow up. As I got closer to high school, I knew I wanted to be a journalist. I loved writing, a lot. When my teachers, family members, and family friends asked me what I wanted to be when I grow up I said, "A journalist of course, what else?" Some gave me disappointed looks, but it never changed my mind about what I wanted to be.</p> <p>Before I graduated from high school, my family and I immigrated to the USA. English wasn't one of my strengths at all; I could speak French more than I spoke English. Right away my dream of being a journalist was destroyed. As I got closer to graduation date, I suddenly decided I wanted to study Spanish to become a translator. I had improved my English of course, but I thought it wasn't good enough to be a journalist in America. "How can I be a journalist when my English isn't that great? And my accent, oh forget it," I thought to myself.</p> <p>By the second year of my college career I took a Journalism class as an elective for my Spanish for the Professions major. It was nothing advanced or deep in the journalism field. NewsU was of the extra credit assignments. Before that class I had never learned about NewsU. I wanted to see what it was about and get to know what it could teach me about this field. I signed up and did every extra credit assignment I could get, not because I needed it, but because it showed me so many things that I couldn't learn from a 100 level class that I was taking. It brought my passion back to me.</p> <p>I went from one course to another on NewsU. With only a few of them, I learned most of what college courses teach students in four years. The difference is that NewsU isn't a big textbook with so many materials that students never read. It has a different way of teaching without getting people bored or tired of reading.</p> <p>By the end of my fourth semester, I had already switched my major to Journalism. Now I'm a senior who is graduating in May with a journalism degree an emphasis on broadcast. I learned that passion can be restored by one hint that life can give, and that hint for me was NewsU. I have published articles online with UNLV, and it felt amazing reading my byline. I also had the pleasure of interviewing an anthropologist who led a research team that recently found a 2.8 million year jawbone in Ethiopia, which fills the gap in the history of</p>

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	<p>human evolution. I would have never been able to accomplish such things without the help NewsU gave me; letting me know that I have always wanted to be a journalist and I should have never doubted myself once.</p> <p>Esraa Malha Passion in a different language <i>University of Nevada Las Vegas</i></p>
<p>Entry 21</p>	<p>In 1998, I had open heart surgery and at the time I was working for a large daily chain newspaper in New Jersey. While lying for seven days in my hospital bed after the surgery I began to think that there had to be more to life than working 9 to 5, and that is when I decided I would start my own newspaper.</p> <p>It took me along with a partner several months to get things off the ground, and start the newspaper but, we finally accomplished the dream of owning our own paper.</p> <p>We were actually challenging the Daily and a weekly for news dominance in our market.</p> <p>NewsU has played an important role these past years in keeping us grow and stay ahead of the curve.</p> <p>Now in business for 15 years, it is so important for our publication and other newspapers to continue to play a vital role in media, and NewsU helps us do that.</p> <p>Joe Calamito Publisher <i>River View Observer</i></p>
<p>Entry 22</p>	<p>I first learned about the Poynter Institute when I was a graduate student at American University in Washington, D.C. I was curious about the place because it was in the same city as my husband's paternal relatives, St. Petersburg, Florida. So when we came down to vacation, I would visit the facility. I would walk around and visit the store where there were broadcast journalism videotapes. I figured I could one day use the videotapes when I became a teacher. That was my goal in going to grad school, to see how the faculty taught communication. So I had my videotapes just in case I found a job in education.</p> <p>Ten years later, I was offered a job to teach in a university. I was going from the newsroom into the classroom. Never fear...I had my trusty videotapes from Poynter that would wow my students. They wowed them all right. The videotapes were pretty old by now and the students knew it. When I learned about Poynter's NewsU, it was like an answer to prayer. All these great lessons...I poured over the course subjects. I even bought some to later share in my classes, but what I was really searching for was the self-directed courses...the FREE self-</p>

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	<p>directed courses...anything that was free.</p> <p>When I was focusing on a certain subject in class, I would have my students supplement the lesson with a Poynter News U course. The courses are so interactive. I even spend time in the courses I assign to the students. It served as a refresher to me and I learned a lot which made me a better teacher.</p> <p>I include Poynter NewsU in my syllabus under supplemental materials. Students are required to register the first week of class. In most cases, they must spend at least one hour in each lesson. They are then to copy and paste their course report into the Poynter assignment area on Blackboard, my school's course management system. Sometimes, I have them work on the Poynter NewsU courses in class and sometimes as homework. I value what the courses have added to the experience of my students.</p> <p>Better yet, I value what the U has added to my experience. I can't imagine a world without Poynter NewsU. It is such an awesome program. I am so used to having that resource in my classes that I would be lost if I no longer had access to them. They have become an integral part of the classroom experience.</p> <p>I don't have a picture of my students working on a Poynter assignment, but just imagine a computer lab of 18-20 young adults intently concentrating on the assigned course. Poynter NewsU, you have made my semester.</p> <p>Pia Marie Jordan Assistant Professor <i>Morgan State University</i></p>
Entry 23	<p>Star struck--the feeling I had when I attended the 2011 Write Your Heart Out, Washington conference, co-hosted by Poynter NewsU, Georgetown University, and the Washington Post. We heard from the best in the industry: Roy Peter Clark, Gene Weingarten, and Eugene Robinson, to name a few. As a new communications professional, I wasn't sure what to expect but was enthralled with the energy and prestige of the workshop. The Pulitzer-Prize winning panelists showcased the glamour of grammar, how to conduct powerful interviews, boundaries surrounding reporting from the field, ethical considerations, and how to edit for clarity. Whether it was a hard news story or a magazine feature, every reporter talked about the essentials: writing captivating headlines, incorporating riveting quotes, describing sensory details, and the use of varied sentence structure, tone, and white space. I left as a different person: curious and hungry for more.</p> <p>I realized that day that journalism was just as much of an art as it is a science. It's humanity at its finest. What I continue to learn is that in today's digital landscape, journalism isn't an archived topic replaced by social news feeds--in fact, storytelling has never been more alive.</p> <p>Two years later, I attended the second Write Your Heart Out, Washington conference. This time it was at the Washington Post. I was surrounded by leaders in the industry: Roy Peter</p>

	<p>Clark, Bob Woodward, and digital pioneer Ezra Klein. I didn't tell anyone that I wasn't a journalist. I chose to blend in with the crowd, an impressive lot of newspaper reporters, freelance writers, book authors, and editors. I didn't dare mutter "PR&" for fear I might lose my front-row seat and a chance to soak in the wisdom of today's leading writers, editors, and producers.</p> <p>That day, I left again with a passion for journalism. I knew my job in media relations depended on being able to stay up to date on the latest news trends. (Not to mention being able to implement tools from the field.) I brought back a continuing education handout to my office circled with every online NewsU class I thought we should take. The entire paper was highlighted.</p> <p>Soon after, I enrolled in a day-long seminar which was streamed live from St. Petersburg, Fla. The topic was reporting for impact and offered tips on how to include visual elements into feature stories. The tips have enabled me to conduct effective interviews, diving deep into the impact our nonprofit organization has on individuals and the larger community. This helps journalists I reach out to paint a brighter picture, fresh with first-person accounts and vivid details. Our communication team uses the same tips for connecting with our members-in the forms of fact sheets, emails, a weekly blog, and through our quarterly publication.</p> <p>In addition to offering tips for impactful storytelling, Poynter NewsU offers help for editing, too. I recently took Merrill Perlman's "Writers Without Editors" course, which helped me learn about the importance of fact checking. Pinpointing original sources of information and remaining on the lookout for ambiguous details is a necessity for every editor and writer. I can't imagine a better teacher than a former editor of the New York Times. In a fast-paced news cycle, credibility remains king.</p> <p>I'm grateful to have Poynter NewsU as a resource, one that remains affordable and accessible at all times. From quick Webinars on National Grammar Day to day-long conferences, Poynter provides it all. I look forward to using Poynter NewsU as a resource, one that will help my organization break through the noise and enable our story to be heard across all channels: print, broadcast, and through ever-evolving digital platforms.</p> <p>Happy Birthday Poynter News U and thank you for all that you do!</p> <p>Jessica Frost Public Relations Manager <i>Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine</i></p>
Entry 24 	<p>I was introduced to Poynter NewsU by one of my senior producers. She had signed up for NewsU and was excited about what she was learning. So, I looked into it. One course she was particularly excited about was "Aim for the Heart." I signed up for the self-directed course and book. As I delved into these materials, I became convinced that they would be the perfect tools to coach and develop my team of producers.</p>

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	<p>As I browsed the Poynter NewsU website, I discovered other courses that were perfect for my producers. I had them all sign up for the free "Writing Tips" podcast you offer. After seeing the descriptions of your Webinars and other self-directed courses--I jumped in with both feet and paid for my entire team of 26 producers and support staff to enroll in the "Aim for the Heart" self-directed course with book.</p> <p>Since then, we have watched informative Webinars followed by great discussions about how what was presented is pertinent to the work we do. In fact, because of your wonderful policy of giving Webinar purchasers the option to watch rebroadcasts when most convenient, I am able to plan to watch those Webinars when producers are back in the office from assignment.</p> <p>Poynter NewsU is the most comprehensive training platform I have come across for the writing and production professional. Thank you for the high quality of relevant content you produce. With it, I have now have a sustained and constantly renewed way to give my staff the professional development they need.</p> <p>David Kithcart, Jr Features Director CBN</p>
Entry 25	<p>My whole life I have always believed that there is a reason for everything and everything happens when it is supposed to. Poynter NewsU has been a blessing, finding classes teaching journalism are slim.</p> <p>I found Poynter NewsU during my research. I never contemplated becoming a journalist because most of my life I drove rigs, dump trucks to semis; hulling everything from demolition debris, stone, slag, hazardous waste and unclaimed freight in order to support my children. One thing about driving a rig you have a lot of time to think. While waiting on loads I had plenty of time to read, so I studied. After I quit driving I started my own business and went back to college. I earned my Associates Degree of Applied Science in Environmental Technology. I learned a lot about the materials I hauled and how much of a physical and environmental issue the waste were. After graduating we moved to Florida and I went to work for the Department of Agriculture until our office closed.</p> <p>Then the economy turned upside down after losing our home due to lack of work I became ill. My son moved us to the Vacation Lodge Hotel in Kissimmee, Florida, to be close to his job. This was a real learning experience. Wow! It was a world in itself I met so many families that were displaced after losing their homes to eviction or foreclosures due to the loss of jobs or cut hours. Most people do not realize that it really difficult for people to rent a place to live after losing their homes. Because the families were unable find a place to rent they end up living in low cost extended stay hotels.</p> <p>On June 27, 2011, the hotel caught fire. We lost everything that night. Along with all the other families were dealt another blow, we were homeless again. My son and I went to live</p>

with my brother and his wife. Like I said, there is a reason for everything and everything happens when it is supposed to. My sister-in-law was fighting breast cancer. By October of 2011 she started to lose weight, in November she was diagnosed with stage four breast cancer that metastasized in to her bones and liver, then her brain. She fought so hard to beat the cancer and was so scared. We were needed there for her, she was very special and we all loved her. I went to work for Walmart to be close to the house in case I was needed home quickly.

While working for Walmart unloading trailers I had a brilliant idea. I could work toward becoming a photojournalist and incorporate my environmental technology degree with photojournalism dealing with environmental and nature issues.

Poynter NewsU has been a great help for me. When I started I did not know the first thing about journalism, writing, grammar, sentence structure or punctuation. While attending college I learned enough to get me through my college years, but it just was not that important to me. I hate public speaking or even talking to people. I confuse people when I talk, so I enjoy writing. Putting my thoughts and what I want to say in writing is less confusing for people. I normally feel like I do not fit in anywhere.

After attending Poynter NewsU Environmental Journalism Workshop I feel like I belong. Now I want to learn everything I can so I will be the best freelance photojournalist that I can be.

Cynthia Heppe
None

Entry 26



The amazing thing about Poynter is how many different ways it helps me as a journalism educator. I can list six different levels at which I use NewsU and Poynter's other work to make me a more effective educator and mentor to journalists at different stages of their careers.

First, I deal with a lot of beginners, and they use the Be a Reporter Game to start out. It helps them to appreciate all that's involved in reporting. Later, they can get extra credit for doing the Cleaning Your Copy exercises. These help me to reach students who often don't listen in lectures and need hands-on exercises to learn.

Second, I work with more advanced reporters, in student media and my advanced courses, who use the law course, the Cleaning Your Copy course, the editing courses, and others.

Third, I am active with the hyperlocal paper in our community, written by citizen journalists, and in the Society of Professional Journalists, where I often meet people seeking to start a freelance career in mid-life. Poynter courses are ideal for these people because they offer a variety of starting points and endpoints -- people's goals and experience differ widely.

Fourth, I use the Webinars and advanced courses myself, to stay on top of the latest techniques and technology. This year, I had to start teaching video in a multimedia course,

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	<p>so I attended a couple of Webinars and took a full Poynter course in video journalism to prepare. I cannot thank you enough for having flexible, online courses and Webinars that I can fit into my schedule as needed. By the way, the just-in-time video training has been extremely helpful. The course is going well! My students seem to love the fact I remember the challenges of learning what they are learning. I even use some of the bad videos I shot, early in the course, as instruction materials.</p> <p>Fifth, I also want to thank Poynter for its work in ethics, where Kelly McBride and others have been at the leading edge in research and practical advice for journalists working in a changing field.</p> <p>Sixth, Poynter provides wonderful research on what employers and educators believe is most important for student journalists to learn. Every year at the annual conference of journalism educators, the AEJMC, you are there with the information we need to keep abreast of what we need to teach in a rapidly changing field.</p> <p>Carrie Buchanan Assistant Professor <i>John Carroll University</i></p>
Entry 27	<p>My journey into journalism began in 1981 in High School. I Anchored CATV News for a small cable television supplier and then made my way into radio covering sports and hosting music programming. While doing this I entered college, majoring in Radio TV Film.</p> <p>I spent five years working in radio and eventually running the small station. It hit me one day there was little financial security and left the industry. I changed gears and became a deputy sheriff for 25 years.</p> <p>About 2 years ago I decided to re-enter the world of radio & journalism. I met with one News Director who told me I had the skill set but needed to update to this century's technology. I launched myself full force in taking classes with Poynter and other outlets. I updated my game! I was offered today (3/13/15) a News Reporter job for a newspaper. The great twist, they want to modernize and include podcasts and want my radio background to help them evolve too!</p> <p>I stepped away for 25 years and the industry changed, I adapted and found a home. Poynter has played a role in updating me with the change in the modern era news cycle and how the public receives their news. Thank you Poynter.</p> <p>Key Budge Content Creator <i>TehachapiBuzz.com</i></p>

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<p>Entry 28</p>	<p>NewsU offered a course in SEO writing, which I took a few years ago when I was out of work. The skills I learned, plus listing the course in the education part of my resume, resulted in getting hired as an SEO copywriter. And it was free!</p> <p>Over the years, I've taken as many free or low-cost online courses as I wanted and needed from NewsU. I recommend it to every writer, young or old, that I know. There is always something of value to learn from what's offered. Plus, the instructors answer questions when you email them.</p> <p>I am deeply grateful for the continuing education courses NewsU offers. No one is ever too old to learn a new skill or hone the ones they have. NewsU gives me the opportunity to reach into new territory, and add it on my resume.</p> <p>Thank you!</p> <p>Becca Bryan Freelance Writer <i>Becca Bryan Online</i></p>
<p>Entry 29</p>	<p>NewsU has been a tool I've been aware of since I was in graduate school, back in the earlier 2000s :)</p> <p>It's been a great resource as a new journalist and as an educator. I've meant to use it more in my classrooms but have found almost even more valuable to train myself in an industry that is constantly pivoting. By making me better informed it has allowed me to make my students better informed. I train students that might not go down the journalism track, in fact most of them won't. But by using these courses they are more informed citizens. That's extremely important to me, perhaps more important than training pure journalists.</p> <p>I still have my NewsU flashdrive/bracelet and it has transferred many files. But not as much information as I have transferred to new minds.</p> <p>Kate Edenberg Assistant Professor <i>University of Wisconsin-Stout</i></p>
<p>Entry 30</p> <p>✘✘</p>	<p>I am not a traditionally trained journalist. My degree is in political science with an emphasis in Legal Assistant Studies. When I decided to leave the world of lawyers and renew my childhood dream of becoming a journalist, I searched far and wide to find a resource that could bring me up to speed with others who had journalism degrees. I tried Mediabistro but found that their classes were out of my budget and left me wanting in the end.</p> <p>Then I found NewsU. NewsU gave me the best of both worlds - concrete training in the how-tos as well as up-to-the minute innovations. As the world of journalism changed, so did the offerings of NewsU. NewsU became my go-to source for learning.</p>

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	<p>Taking classes at NewsU gave me the confidence to join professional organizations such as SEJ, where I've risen to help with the leadership of talks and tours at conferences. I've also recently been asked to give a seminar to scientists on how to talk to journalists.</p> <p>I could not have accomplished any of this without the training from NewsU. I have used NewsU for my personal journalism training since 2008 and in that time I have gone from unpaid online magazine contributor to paid positions as print magazine columnist, blogger, independent radio producer, and multimedia journalist.</p> <p>Poynter and NewsU have helped me grow along my journalism journey to become the well-rounded journalist I am today.</p> <p>Lana Straub Freelance Journalist <i>KXWT</i></p>
Entry 31	<p>I made the jump to freelance journalism long before it became viable or a popular avenue once newspaper layoffs started the industry's freerfall. Initially I left my full time job as a business reporter to spend more time at home with my then young children.</p> <p>At first, it was very lonely. While I knew a few other freelancers, gone was the daily comraderie and more importantly, editing support and feedback I so loved in my quest to become a better writer. I also missed the special sessions my past employers held on writing and reporting where I learned about writing coaches such as Jack Hart, and from experts like Jacqui Banaszynski.</p> <p>Knowing I needed to keep my skills current as I navigated the changing newspaper industry and the world of freelancing online, I jumped at the chance to join Poynter's NewsU in 2010. I was blown away at the impressive learning opportunities at affordable prices. Here was a tribe of my people.</p> <p>I am thrilled to learn from experts like Roy Peter Clark who is helping me be better writers through his webinars, and to take self-directed courses that help me learn how to use new technologies like Audacity and dive into new topics like healthcare reporting.</p> <p>Without the support of editors or sponsored learning opportunities, I consider Poynter and NewsU to be my online newsroom where I can keeping up with the latest news in the industry and continue my lifelong learning through courses, webinars and self-directed learning -- all in one place.</p> <p>M. Sharon Baker Freelance Journalist <i>self employed</i></p>

Poynter. NEWS UNIVERSITY

Entry 32

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I work for The Anniston Star, a community publication in Alabama known as the Teaching Newspaper. That means we have a handful of graduate students almost doubling the staff our newsroom each summer.

It also means I get to tell those interns about activating their verbs, understanding Alabama's open meetings laws and why it's best to quit worrying with the damn recorder and just take notes the best they can.

There's never enough time to cover all I want to with them. If I had only one tweet-length piece of advice to give them before they went on to their careers, it would be, "Never stop being a student. #NewsU."

In 2009, I was getting my master's degree in community journalism at the University of Alabama. One of professors there introduced me to Poynter's online courses. Around that same time, The Star embraced NewsU's webinar catalogue and hasn't stopped yet.

And what I've learned in those webinars has been every bit as useful as the skill I gained in traditional journalism courses.

I remember an online chat [<http://www.poynter.org/how-tos/advice/221875/live-chat-today-are-you-a-happy-writer-or-a-sad-writer/>] in 2013 with Roy Peter Clark titled "Are you a happy writer or a sad writer?" The topic seemed odd to me, but it was a chance to talk with the Roy Peter Clark, so I joined in. The session turned out to be the writing coach explaining how to use principles of cognitive psychology to create productive habits in the newsroom.

That session lasted a half hour, but I probably recount the advice from it -- to other reporters and to myself -- every day. My takeaway from the chat was that happy writers focus on ways to improve their work rather than getting caught up in self-doubt. Now, when I feel envious of another reporter, I don't get depressed; I get my pen and start reading their work, making notes in the margins.

Because of Poynter webinars, I now get email alerts when our state lawmakers file legislation [<https://www.newsu.org/courses/digital-tools-sunlight>], and our editors can make interactive timelines as news stories break

But the NewsU workshop that has meant the most to me was an introduction to data journalism course [<https://www.newsu.org/data-analysis-training-package14>]. Back when I was in college, the skill was called computer-aided reporting. I had fantasized about taking the class, but decided against it. After all, it would involve spreadsheet software, databases, maybe even statistics. Those things were for people minoring in sociology or taking higher level economics. Smart people.

In 2014, however, Poynter promised that the workshop would teach reporters with no experience working with data. A week after that course, I could mine documents with

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	<p>thousands of rows of data to find political candidates' top contributors.</p> <p>Add to that a Digital Tools webinar on Tableau Public, and I can turn unemployment data into an interactive map showing the jobless rates in each Alabama county</p> <p>It's a long way from The Guardian's Datablog, but the skills I've learned help The Star tell stories in more dynamic ways, and I owe many of those skills to instructors in St. Petersburg, Fla.</p> <p>The ultimate value that NewsU brings is the connections it makes among its faculty, journalists and the professionals making the industry better. Because of those connections, newsrooms around the world can keep improving.</p> <p>The interns that come to The Star this summer will likely make such connections -- as the editors will no doubt sign up for every webinar we can afford.</p> <p>What I most hope the students leave with, though, is a belief that there's nothing they should fear learning.</p> <p>Daniel Gaddy Assistant Metro Editor <i>The Anniston Star</i></p>
Entry 33 /	<p>My Poynter story is quite a bit different from others -- it's almost a backward-developed tale.</p> <p>I've always worked in journalism and I've always called myself journalist--long before I got my BA in Journalism/Political Science/American Studies.</p> <p>Back in the day I worked as a stringer to regional papers and some national magazines. At the same time, I was a radio announcer/DJ/producer/talk show host, and this while I was freelancing as a secretary to make money! Writing is what I do, and as we always used to say in the newsroom, we're all a whore for the right price. So I worked as much as I could, made essentially no money, which was good because I was single, had no kids, no car, no nuthin'. But it was all good and it was fun! I was writing!</p> <p>Along the way I got married, had kids, and finally enrolled in university as what they called an "older returning student"; I was 38 and was taking English 101, starting at the bottom. No matter. I carried a full load, served internships in TV and radio and the college paper. Graduated, continued in radio, then a jump to print for a military newspaper on an island in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, 2200 miles equi-distant to Hawaii, Australia, and Japan. The island was one-half mile wide, 2.5 miles long, and 14,000 feet deep on one side and 300 feet deep on the other. As my editor always said, you just can't take a bad picture of a palm tree!</p> <p>When I came back to the states, I decided I needed a "real" job since I had others depending</p>

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	<p>on me. I hired myself out as a contract technical writer-editor to various Federal government agencies -- and made a steady wage to keep us afloat. All the while missing my craft. But you do what you have to do.</p> <p>Time passes, life rolls on. About 5 years ago a colleague turned me on to Poynter. I was so out of the business and J-world, I had no clue. Holy cow! There are people out there like me who are trying to make it and who need help and who have found the help! Even as a technical writer-editor, I still call and see myself as a journalist. That's who I am and how I think. So in the meantime, technology has come along and even though I'm working in technology heaven with all the best equipment and enormous monitors, I felt that I was truly behind the times.</p> <p>I needed immediate help. I needed to get wired and Poynter showed up on my door. Apart from the wonderful resources, the classes, the joy of being with my peers even in the Ethernet, Poynter has renewed my enthusiasm and drive to do what I do and love. Look, Kids, I'm 73, and as they say I've seen it all. But I'm not done yet. I have lots to do and more people to see, places to go, contracts to sign.</p> <p>And Poynter is helping me over those bumps in the road in my mind&. I can get wired, I can get up to speed, and I can enter this new phase and compete. That's Poynter for me. How do you say thank you enough? Thanks to everyone for thinking up this Poynter idea, for birthing Poynter, and for being there. And you were the help and the kick in the pants that I needed! Old journalists never quit writing, we just pack up our papers and pens and computers and move to a different table! I'm on my way!</p> <p>Stephanie Phillips Senior Technical Writer-Editor <i>Phillips and Cash</i></p>
Entry 34	<p>After a long career in academic book publishing as a proofreader, I took a job 12 years ago as a proofreader in the in-house marketing department of a Farm Credit System bank. It was a major adjustment, training myself away from Chicago Manual of Style and adopting AP Style!</p> <p>After about a year, management decided I should try writing feature stories for our member magazine. Before my first interview, I turned to NewsU for a basic journalism course. The course was very well presented and organized, and even gave me the opportunity to try out some leads. It helped so much and gave me the news- and feature-writing skills -- and the courage -- to perform the interview and to tell the customer's story. Many thanks.</p> <p>Tina Jackson Communications Specialist <i>Farm Credit Bank of Texas</i></p>

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<p>Entry 35</p>	<p>I've just really enjoyed being able to hear hands-on advice from my peers about how to use the ever-changing selection of tools out there for editors, writers and journalists.</p> <p>I try to keep up on everything but there are only so many hours in a day and it's great to get, say, a crash course on using LinkedIn to source stories or get story ideas.</p> <p>NewsU is the only place I've found that consistently delivers that kind of practical, real-world education and content - and at prices that are wonderfully reasonable! How can you beat that?</p> <p>Joseph Rydholm editor <i>Quirk's Marketing Research Review</i></p>
<p>Entry 36</p> <p>* *</p>	<p>In a little more than a year I went from directing the weekend newscast, to producing the weekday "Prime News at 7pm" show. That's what Poynter News University can do if you really take advantage of it.</p> <p>When I started at the Chattanooga CBS affiliate, I enjoyed the technical side of TV news. But after a couple of months I realized that writing was my true passion. Of course, it had always been one of my favorite hobbies, but I never thought I had the talent or know-how to actually write anything of substance, much less news. I had taken media writing classes in college, but they were so bland and ordinary. I knew that if I (a student amongst seasoned professionals) was going to be taken seriously as a journalist, I needed to educate myself. I didn't want to look like a fool and ruin my journalistic reputation before it even existed. So after a quick trip to Google, I started quietly taking lesson on NewsU.</p> <p>As I learned the finer points of writing and formatting, I started looking for local news stories to report on. I never told anyone beforehand that I was shooting and writing these stories. I just left packages in the video system and sent a casual email to the news director saying they were there if someone needed to fill time. Sure, some of the first ones were rough, but the further into Poynter's lesson I got, the better my stories became. I learned how to focus on the story and stop following rabbit trails, I was able to shorten just about everything i wrote into concise sentences that really got to the meat of things, and I got the hang of writing in a way that is reading to read for an anchor.</p> <p>Eventually I decided it was time to move beyond my casual news suggestions. The News director had seen my stories and had mentioned on occasion that he really liked them. So, I set up an appointment with him and pitched a series of segments. Nothing major, just features pieces about our meteorologist visiting local outdoor recreation businesses. I offered to shoot, write, and edit them if he would allow her to come and give us a news vehicle to get around. There was hesitation from him at first, but as soon as he saw the first segment, we were told to use any resources we needed. A local credit union actually saw the piece and called the station to ask if they could sponsor it.</p>

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	<p>It was the writing that really sold the piece, and it was Poynter News University that taught me how to craft that writing professionally.</p> <p>Months later, the series is still going strong and I've accepted the job of producer of the show in which the segment airs. Things are looking great for me and I have NewsU.org to thank for that.</p> <p>Samuel Jacob Henson TV Producer <i>WDEF News 12</i></p>
<p>Entry 37</p>	<p>This year, I embarked on an exciting - and slightly terrifying - new adventure. I am now the sponsor for a student broadcasting group responsible for live streaming our school's varsity sports events to our website. I have no background in journalism at all and am probably the last person you would think of when sports are involved. There was no existing curriculum and I was fumbling my way through, learning right alongside my students.</p> <p>I found NewsU while searching for some lessons to help my students improve their interviewing skills for pre-produced packages and for sideline reports. We worked through the lesson on interviewing together and it sparked a class discussion that has lead to a new thoughtfulness in the way they approach their interview subjects. Now my students are excited to interview coaches, players, visiting media correspondents, pretty much anybody who will stand still long enough for them to ask a question!</p> <p>We've gotten so many compliments on our Coach's Show feature and on the Wrestling 101 package that we produced for our broadcast. Our coaches appreciate the professional manner in which the students operate, and our student athletes are excited to be interviewed. Best of all, my students are no longer intimidated by talking to coaches and players. One of my students recently interviewed the reporter from Cox who was at our school covering the same game we were covering! She wasn't even nervous because she knew what to do.</p> <p>Thank you so much for your help with this skill! I look forward to implementing other NewsU courses into our classwork.</p> <p>Sara Small Teacher <i>Carl Albert High School</i></p>
<p>Entry 38</p>	<p>I acquired my journalism degree in 2011 with an emphasis in broadcasting. Broadcast journalism tends to be much different than traditional journalism. After graduation, I held a part-time job as a producer for a radio station while working full-time in job unrelated to</p>

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journalism.

Frustrated with the radio industry and unfulfilled at my full-time job, I sought out employment somewhere else. I eventually found a job with Land Line Magazine, an industry publication for the professional driver. I knew nothing about trucks, and my journalism background was more geared towards radio, not straight news reporting.

Through a combination of help from the Land Line team and the several courses I have taken through NewsU, I have become a more well-rounded reporter, writer and journalist. I have learned about everything from social media to "solutions journalism." Improvement is still needed, but knowing I can continue my education and learning process via courses specific to my needs, I am confident that I will become the writer I want to be.

Tyson Fisher

News clerk/staff writer

Land Line Magazine