In support of academic journalism

It has been a long, hot summer for journalists all over the world — including in Stephenville, Texas, where journalists’ ability to protect their sources is under threat at Tarleton State University. The Fort Worth SPJ board has voted its strong backing of Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Quanecia Fraser and their efforts to protect Fraser’s sources in a story about sexual harassment allegations.

Malone, a faculty adviser to the student-produced Texan News Service, was reprimanded in the spring and Fraser was told she might be reprimanded, because they did not report to administrators the names of women who came forward to Fraser with allegations against a professor. The women asked that their names be kept confidential.

The issue is of broad importance to the journalism community. Student journalists frequently break stories on topics such as harassment and assault on and around college campuses. Student media, performing their traditional watchdog role, often are the only campus voice speaking on these matters. Frequently, the alleged victims request that their names not be released. This creates a conflict between college policies created to carry out Title IX of the federal Civil Rights Act and Texas’ journalist shield law — and possibly between college policies and the press freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment.

First Amendment attorneys, a national SPJ official and other relevant observers are also asking questions about Tarleton’s actions and about the advisers. The problem has arisen at other campuses as well, and it isn’t likely to go away any time soon.

– Gayle Reaves
Each logo in the ad rail links to the sponsor’s website!

**GET A JOB. UTA Shorthorn ex-Lindsey Juarez’s** Community Impact is hiring after two new reporter positions opened up in McKinney and Grapevine/Colleyville/Southlake. The North Lake College Journalism Department seeks an adjunct to teach a class in mass communications and another in media writing, back-to-back Mondays and Wednesdays. Contact Kathleen Stockmier, student publications manager, 972-273-3498, kstockmier@dcccd.edu. The Dallas Morning News is hiring an audience engagement producer. The Dallas Business Journal seeks a data reporter. Requirements include 1-3 years of journalism or the equivalent and experience reporting on business data. Familiarity with public-company, bank and regulatory agency filings a plus. Info. From Stars and Stripes: Looking for a Pentagon reporter, copy editor and podcast producer. Former Shorthorn photographer Michael Minasi is headed to graduate school, and does he have a job for you — his position — at The Courier of Montgomery County, the daily in Conroe, Texas. “This is a great place to go for a dedicated would-be photojournalist fresh out of college and looking for a place to start,” he writes. “The coworkers are cool, and on occasion you’ll work with our parent company, the Houston Chronicle.” Info. The Southern Poverty Law Center in Montgomery, Ala., seeks an investigative reporter to produce original content on civil rights and social justice issues. Info. NPR’s growing team has several new openings: senior supervising editor/producer for “Morning Edition”; supervising editor, national desk; news apps developer; news apps data editor; visual newscast-visual editor; visual newscast copy editor; and comedy writer, “Wait Wait ... Don’t Tell Me.” All are in D.C. except the last, in Chicago. Info. The Houston Chronicle seeks a finance and economics writer. Info.

Freedom of Information Foundation of Texas update: Mayor Sylvester Turner’s former press secretary has been indicted by a grand jury accused of failing to turn over public records late last year. The indictment, handed up July 17, cites former Shorthorn photographer Michael Minasi is headed to graduate school, and does he have a job for you — his position — at The Courier of Montgomery County, the daily in Conroe, Texas. “This is a great place to go for a dedicated would-be photojournalist fresh out of college and looking for a place to start,” he writes. “The coworkers are cool, and on occasion you’ll work with our parent company, the Houston Chronicle.” Info. The Southern Poverty Law Center in Montgomery, Ala., seeks an investigative reporter to produce original content on civil rights and social justice issues. Info. NPR’s growing team has several new openings: senior supervising editor/producer for “Morning Edition”; supervising editor, national desk; news apps developer; news apps data editor; visual newscast-visual editor; visual newscast copy editor; and comedy writer, “Wait Wait ... Don’t Tell Me.” All are in D.C. except the last, in Chicago. Info. The Houston Chronicle seeks a finance and economics writer. Info.

Fun in the sun, under a roof

**more**
eChaser on p. 3

Kay Pirtle, Gayle Reaves and Tracy Everbach, from left, at the Mayborn Literary Nonfiction Conference awards dinner, July 21. More pictures from Paul Knudsen Photography
Tarleton comm students lend a hand in post-Harvey Rockport

Heather Buhrat saw pieces of life scattered along roadsides in Rockport, Texas—abandoned bicycles, electric toy cars. A teddy bear in a pink tutu. “It was heartbreaking,” said Buhrat, a Tarleton State University student.

“Everywhere you looked, there were reminders of life before.”

Buhrat was one of a dozen Tarleton students who traveled to Rockport in the spring as part of a crisis communications course offered by Dr. Ceesna Winslow, an assistant professor of communication. Hurricane Harvey devastated Rockport in 2017, stunning the island town and surrounding refugia. The island was ground zero and is still recovering. Winslow was watching the coverage when she said to her students, “Why don’t we do something for a course that would make a difference?” They knew they needed to find a way to embrace this terrible moment.

A longtime public relations professional, Winslow had experience with both crisis communications and disaster relief. The course seemed a perfect fit. She had led a class of college students from the Ohio university where she previously taught to Louisiana to help after Hurricane Katrina, and her own childhood home was badly damaged in an earthquake in 1971.

“I can remember what it’s like to be homeless and temporarily fostered because of nature’s wrath,” she said. “I understand what it means to start all over and be dependent on the charity of strangers.”

Students in the course studied communications processes, analyzed social and ethical implications, discussed the roles of media, relief agencies and first responders, and learned effective communication techniques. A trip to Rockport during spring break served as the course capstone.

While there, students toured hurricane-ravaged neighborhoods and the town’s Emergency Operations Center, met with the mayor and other community leaders, talked with residents and volunteered with Samaritan’s Purse, a nonprofit, to rebuild homes.

As part of the course, the students created publishable projects, including photo stories, feature articles and documentaries, to detail their experiences. Topics ranged from how small businesses were affected to the homeless pets left in Harvey’s wake. (Window and a student each adopted an abandoned dog, one of which now answers to Harvey.)

Kendyl Weatherly, a junior communication studies major, created a documentary about the volunteers’ experiences. Before the trip, she had never given much thought to the difficulty of crisis communications. “It was eye-opening,” she said. “We learned the importance of one voice, one message. Humans can’t remember a thousand voices.”

Working with another student, Bushart created a photo story, “Foundations of Hope,” documenting residents’ struggles to rebuild. “Every day we saw a lot of brokenness, but I never felt broken at the end of the day. I felt rejuvenated,” she said. “The people we met were hopeful. That was my biggest takeaway. There was hope everywhere.”

— Sarah Bahle, Tarleton State University

OVER & OUT   |   John Dycus, Fort Worth SJU

I would call it a success both July chapter activities — the traditional social at the Fort Worth and Buddy Jones’ Mansfield home and an outside-the-box sty at Dallas Bathys Arts District. Great food and old friends marked the former, higher energy and fresh faces the latter. Where more than 20 journalists and friends mingled and mingled and cross-county carried over to the Wild Detectives bookhole bar. Thanks, Kim and Buddy, for your Mansfield home and an outside-the-box sally into the LaRocque Family catalog ...

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