

Scripps Howard Students Enjoy Third Annual Media Trip to Washington, D.C.

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By Meagan P. Downing

Twenty-five students and five faculty members of the Scripps Howard School of Journalism and Communications traveled to Washington, D.C. for its third annual media trip. Boarding the bus before sunrise, the students embarked on the trip, anticipating the opportunity to glean knowledge from and network with media professionals.



"I started the media trip three years ago, and I asked Professor [Sheila] Douglas to do all of the logistics," said Professor Rosalynne Whitaker-Heck, the Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs. "I thought it was important for the students to see professionals at work, and I also thought this trip would open the door for [potential] internships."

The first event consisted of two-panel discussions at **Gannett USA Today**. The panelists consisted of individuals in the media industry including columnists, editors, and producers. They encouraged the students by sharing their personal experiences and challenged them to be innovative and creative thinkers. They also discussed the importance of developing a personal brand by infusing excellence into all of their work.

Panelist Tory Hargro spoke about the difference between journalism as a hobby and a craft. He said, "Everybody can report, but not everyone is a good writer consistently. Everyone can take a picture, but not everyone can take a good picture consistently. Acts of journalism can be completed by everyone, but journalism as a craft can only be completed by journalists."

Dr. Kangming Ma enjoyed the session and appreciated the discussion about the importance of multimedia.

"Multimedia is very important. I observed that the discussions correlated with what I teach in my classes."

After leaving Gannett USA Today, the students dispersed into four groups and traveled to different locations including **Bloomberg BNA**, **Hager Sharp**, **WTOP FM radio station**, and **WUSA TV 9**.

Bloomberg BNA is a global business financial information news leader. Freshman broadcast journalism major Terrell Snead found the trip to be very

informative.

"I learned that [Bloomberg] is a main source to professionals, such as lawyers or individuals who work for government agencies."

Hager Sharp is a public relations firm that specializes in topics such as health and safety. Professor Allie-Ryan Butler chaperoned the students who traveled to this location, and he is confident that the students were impacted by their visit.

"The tour guide was a Hampton alumnus, and I think that gave the students the chance to see themselves 10 years after graduation. And the discussion was consistent with Hampton's current mission to address health disparities in our community."

Ballah Boakai, a junior broadcast journalism major, traveled with the group to WTOP-FM radio station. He said certain elements from the discussion reinforced his knowledge about the operations of radio stations.

"I learned [that radio stations] work as a unit. Every job is somehow connected to another one and in order to work there, you really have to know how to do everything."

The students who toured the WUSA TV 9 received a tour of the facilities and news studios, briefing about the equipment and a question-and-answer period with producers.

Senior broadcast journalism major Lauren Kendrick said, "I'm getting ready to graduate, so it was really great to see how a TV station in a larger market is operated."

After touring the various media sites, the students enjoyed shopping and dining at the Chevy Chase Pavilion before returning to Hampton. The Media Trip was a success and a great opportunity for the students to enhance their knowledge. This trip was an opportunity for the students to network and be inspired. They were also enlightened by professionals who are employed in careers in television, newspaper, radio and public relations. The information and encouragement the students received during this trip will prove to be invaluable assets that can be integrated into the classroom experience.

*The writer is a student at the **Scripps Howard School of Journalism and Communications**.*