

2:00-3:15 AM | Google News Initiative | MERTEN 1201

GOOGLE/ RTDNA TRAINING

This training on digital tools will focus on mis- and disinformation, fact-checking and source verification, to aid in elections coverage.



FACILITATOR

BENÉT WILSON | Poynter-Koch Media & Journalism Fellowship

Benét is director of the Poynter-Koch Media & Journalism Fellowship, a year-long program for early-career journalists. She serves on the boards of Mercer University's Center for Collaborative Journalism and the Institute for Independent Journalism. She graduated from American University with a B.A. in broadcast journalism.



The Google News Initiative works with publishers and journalists to fight misinformation, share resources and build a diverse and innovative news ecosystem. We believe everyone, everywhere should be able to access a diversity of credible sources to get the information they need. *Learn more: newsinitiative.withgoogle.com*

The Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA) is the world's largest professional organization devoted exclusively to broadcast and digital journalism. Founded as a grassroots organization in 1946, RTDNA's mission is to promote and protect responsible journalism. *Learn more: rtdna.org/about-us*

3:30-4:30 PM | Networking Session | MERTEN 1201

SPEED MENTORING

Refer to the "Meet Your Mentors" info sheet for mentor bios & areas of expertise to help decide what tables to visit.

1

1. Pick a Mentor based on your career goals or areas of interest.
2. Find their table using the blue numbers like the square to the left.
3. Ask burning questions and have a great conversation!
4. Rotate every 10-15 minutes (we will make an announcement).
5. Repeat and visit a new Mentor.

Tips for Success:

- ✓ **Don't follow the crowd:** Prioritize Mentors with fewer visitors.
- ✓ **Be confident:** Even the Mentors started out as student journalists!
- ✓ **Take notes:** Use your SPJ reporter's notebook to jot down insights.

4:30 PM | Closing Remarks | THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING!

2024 CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE:

STEPHENIE OVERMAN
SPJ Region 2 Coordinator

KATHRYN MANGUS
Conference Co-Chair
Student Media Director

JASON HARTSEL
Conference Co-Chair
Student Media Asst. Director

MASON EVENT STAFF:

Ali Ali
Saahiti Kiran Chamala
Brandyn Fragosa
Viviana Smith
Mathilda Tataw
Wyatt Jones
Eva Jack
Lina Mohamed El Kalla
Erica Munisar
Melissa Gurman



George Mason's student chapter of SPJ was named **Region 2 Chapter of the Year three years in a row (2017, 2018, 2019)** and is proud to welcome the **2024 Region 2 Conference** to our campus!

SPJ is the nation's most broad-based journalism organization, dedicated to encouraging the free practice of journalism and stimulating high standards of ethical behavior. Founded in 1909, SPJ promotes the free flow of information vital to a well-informed citizenry; works to inspire and educate current and future journalists through professional development; and protects First Amendment guarantees of freedom of speech and press through advocacy efforts.

Learn more: spj.org

SPECIAL THANK YOU:

Brenna Maloney
Dr. Kim Meltzer
Amanda Naylor
Heather Ricks
Joyce Dyer
Jonathan Baumstark

2024-2025 GEORGE MASON SPJ OFFICERS:

Mary J Demarco, President
Jamie Gholson, Vice Pres.
Barrett Balzer, Director of Professional Development
Lamia Gamil, Director of Marketing & Communications



Student Media

Student Media empowers students to exercise their First Amendment rights and creativity through the creation of works that inform, enrich, and entertain the Mason community. Student Media is home to 10+ student-run groups that include Mason's newspaper, radio station, TV network, and six literary journals, in addition to a team that produces live sports broadcasts for ESPN+.

Learn more: studentmedia.gmu.edu



SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS

EVENT PROGRAM

2024 REGION 2 CONFERENCE

Saturday, April 13TH

George Mason University
Merten Hall • Fairfax, VA

Share Photos:
#SPJregion2





REGION 2 CONFERENCE

AGENDA | Saturday, April 13, 2024

8:00-8:45 AM | Registration & Breakfast | MERTEN LOBBY

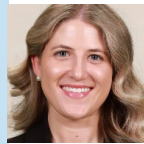
9:00-10:15 AM | Concurrent Session #1 | MERTEN 1202

SPORTS PANEL

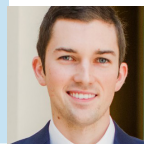
This panel will focus on sports journalism across a variety of media, finding compelling story ideas, and offer tips on starting your career in media.



RODGER SMITH | **WGMU Radio, Mason Department of Communication**
Rodger has advised the George Mason University student-run campus radio station WGMU (wgmuradio.com) and taught radio, podcasting, media and journalism courses since 1994.



VALERIE PREACTOR | **WBAL & 98Rock Radio**
Morning Sports Anchor for WBAL and 98Rock Radio. Host of daily Orioles Pregame show on WBAL. Contributor on the 98Rock Ravens Pregame and Postgame shows. Worked previously as Sideline Reporter/Commentator on ESPN+ and Production Assistant at NBC Sports Washington covering the Wizards and Capitals.



TYLER BYRUM | **Monumental Sports Network**
A two-time graduate of George Mason University and George Mason Student Media alum, I've stayed local in D.C. and made a career of covering the Washington Mystics for Monumental Sports Network. I also am a freelance play-by-play commentator for Mid-Atlantic area colleges and semi-professional teams.

9:00-10:15 AM | Concurrent Session #2 | MERTEN 1204

ELECTIONS PANEL

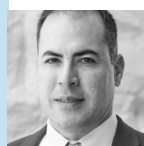
This panel will focus on covering elections, policy, and government at the state, national, local, and campus level. With the 2024 presidential election already taking shape, this session will offer research tips and resources for creating guides to educate your readers on key issues.



DR. KIMBERLY MELTZER | **Mason Department of Communication**
Dr. Meltzer researches and teaches about journalism studies, political, and strategic communication. She focuses on journalistic adaptation to change and is the author of two books. She received the 2020 CMA Honor Roll Adviser Award and previously worked for CNN, NBC, and local and regional newspapers.



ZACH SCHONFELD | **The Hill**
Zach is a courts and legal reporter for The Hill, covering the intersection of national politics and the judiciary. His beat primarily focuses on former President Trump's legal battles and the U.S. Supreme Court. A graduate of The George Washington University, Zach was a reporter/editor at the student-run newspaper, The GW Hatchet.



EUGENE MULERO | **Transport Topics**
Eugene Mulero is the Chief Washington Correspondent at Transport Topics, focusing on Congress and national policy and politics. He writes the "Capitol Agenda" column, leads coverage of elections and is an analyst for SiriusXM's Road Dog Trucking show (ch. 146). He previously worked with HuffPost, E&E News, and CQ Roll Call.



PAYGE HARDY | **guides.vote**
Payge is empowering the voices and votes of young citizens. A first-gen college student, received the KARS scholarship to Columbia University. After organizing campus-wide civic events, she was recruited by Campus Election Engagement Project (CEEP) in 2019 by founder Paul Loeb. She joined guides.vote in 2022.

10:30-11:45 AM | Concurrent Session #3 | MERTEN 1202

CLIMATE PANEL

This panel will focus on telling climate stories with a human focus and offer ideas for how to educate your readers using trusted sources. Experts will share strategies to communicate complex scientific information in a relatable way.



DAN REED | **Center for Climate Change Communication (4C)**
Dan Reed is Associate Director of 4C at George Mason University. 4C is a leading research center focused on strategic communication to improve public understanding and engagement with climate change. Dan is the former director of Planet Forward, a media platform that trains and empowers young storytellers.



KATHRYN THIER | **Research-to-Practice Postdoctoral Fellow**
Kathryn's research focuses on solutions journalism, particularly how it may build support for climate policy solutions. Previously, she taught journalism and PR at the University of Oregon and was a staff writer at Newsday and The Charlotte Observer. She has trained journalists in several countries how to create solutions journalism.



ROBIN REED | **Virginia Tech School of Communication**
Robin Reed is a Professor of Practice at Virginia Tech. He was Chief Meteorologist at WDBJ-TV in Roanoke and later 6PM News Anchor. His work with the American Meteorological Society included the creation of the Certified Broadcast Meteorologist designation. He is the Faculty Advisor for VT SPJ and is SPJVA Pro Chapter member.



RANDY SHOWSTACK | **Independent Journalist (randyshowstack.com)**
Randy is an independent journalist, editor, and communications consultant focusing primarily on environmental and science issues. He is the former senior staff writer for Eos at the American Geophysical Union, where he covered climate change, biodiversity, oceans, and other issues. Previously worked with American Rivers.

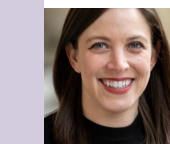
10:30-11:45 AM | Concurrent Session #4 | MERTEN 1204

PUBLIC REPORTING PANEL

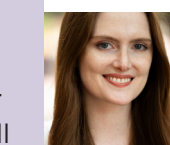
From the White House to the state house to the Board of Visitors, learn how to responsibly (and confidently) report on issues that impact your community. Experts will share tips for navigating legal challenges, obtaining public records, FOIA requests, and more.



KATE HIDALGO BELLOWS | **Chronicle of Higher Education**
Kate is a staff reporter at The Chronicle, covering campus health and safety. She writes about mental health, substance use, campus policing, and student life, among other things. Before that, she reported on labor and housing at The Island Packet in South Carolina. Bellows attended the University of Virginia.



SADIE GORMAN | **The Wall Street Journal**
Sadie covers the Justice Department and federal law enforcement, with an emphasis on the intersection of politics and law. She writes about DOJ leadership and policy ranging from civil rights and criminal justice issues to terrorism, gun violence and national security. She previously worked for the Associated Press and Denver Post.



CHARLOTTE RENE WOODS | **Richmond Times-Dispatch**
Charlotte is an award-winning reporter with a passion for solutions journalism and a special love for writing about government at the local, state and national level. As a politics reporter at Richmond Times-Dispatch she covers Virginia's governor and other members of the executive branch, the state legislature, and members of Congress.



ELLEN GOODRICH | **Student Press Law Center**
Ellen is a graduate of Duke Law School. In high school, she served as the editor of her high school yearbook and studied investigative journalism at the University of Missouri, where she helped create stories for a variety of news outlets.

12:00-1:45 PM | Keynote & MOE Awards | MERTEN 1201

LUNCH, KEYNOTE & AWARDS

MOE Presenters: Stephenie Overman, Denise Dunbar, and Elliott Robinson.



EVAN LAMBERT | **NewsNation**
Evan is an Emmy-nominated and award-winning journalist, who reports local and national news stories in the nation's capital. With more than a decade of experience, Evan covered breaking news during the Capitol riots, protests after the death of George Floyd and remembrances for icons Ruth Bader Ginsburg and John Lewis.

MARK OF EXCELLENCE AWARDS

The Society of Professional Journalists recognizes the best collegiate journalism in Region 2 with 2024 Mark of Excellence Awards winners. Region 2 comprises Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, North Carolina and Virginia. First-place winners will compete at the national level among other regional MOE winners.

