

Eagle's Eye Staff Reflect on Fall Conferences

The Eagle's Eye students continued to hone their writing and reporting skills by attending two journalism conferences this year, Southern Connecticut Journalism Day on October 23rd and the Columbia Fall Journalism Conference on November 2nd. Both trips were made possible with support by the Trumbull ACE Foundation.

At the Southern Connecticut University event, a variety of seminars was highlighted by WTNH-TV News Channel 8 reporter Erin Cox providing students with a first-hand look at live television reporting. "I like to share my experience coming from a public school and having college loans, and losing a job once. So students won't think [journalism] is perfect, but it's possible," said Cox.

There were 1,689 students and advisors who attended the Fall Conference at Columbia University in New York City. They represented 111 schools/organizations from 16 states. Students were able to choose from more than 80 workshop options, ranging from improving writing and reporting skills to exploring photojournalism techniques.

Thirty *Eagle's Eye* staff members attended one or both conferences accompanied by advisor Lisa Acerbo. The students absorbed a wealth of helpful ideas to improve their journalistic skills to fuel the newspaper's never-ending quest to build on its stellar track record of success.

Expressed best in their own words, several students reflected on their experiences at the conferences.

Brett Rosen, *The Eagle's Eye* Editor-in-Chief, attended both conferences: "We were able to broaden our knowledge in the ever-changing field of Journalism. From packaging media in the 21st Century to finding better stories, each seminar taught us invaluable information, which will not only help us at a scholastic level, but also in the real world."

Copy Editor Lindsay Siegal found the trip to Southern "very interesting. The professors who taught the short seminars were extremely entertaining. They gave students a taste of their own experiences and what journalism is like in the real world. My favorite out of the two classes was the one on music journalism and what it's like when you have to review a CD, song, or band that you personally don't enjoy. I learned you have to try to remain unbiased and, if not, you can explain your opinion as long as you state why."

"On the trip to Southern, the first workshop I went to seemed the most meaningful," said sophomore Jill Epstein, an *Eagle's Eye* News Editor. "The man who spoke to us was very witty, and the way he presented his information was very entertaining. Not only did he give me a feel for what a real college course is like, but he connected what we have been doing in Journalism class to the real world. The seminar provided several examples of jobs in the journalism field. I feel like I am now more prepared for the future. I have an idea of what college will be like, and also what job opportunities lay beyond."

Reflecting on his participation in both conferences, Sports Editor Andrew Vojt commented, "I had a fun trip at SCSU because the two workshops I took part in were very informative." The sophomore continued, "The Columbia trip was very formal, but the workshops were smart and fun to attend. The entire experience was fun, because the classes were amazing and the whole city aspect of the trip was fantastic. We got to walk around the city and the college campus, which added a whole new level of fun to the trip."

Senior Lizzie Meyers drew inspiration from both conferences: "Since I was little, I've dreamed of writing for a living, and capturing people's voices with photography. A picture can mean so much when taken the right way, and captured in the right moment; I learned this by attending Columbia. At Southern, I learned how to interpret beautiful photographs. The photographer of these pictures made me feel as if I was there when the moment was captured. If I wasn't sure I wanted to be a photojournalist before, I'm sure now. Thank you for this."

Megan Manowitz appreciated an exposure to college life as much as attending the conference: "The time my Journalism class and I spent at Columbia will not soon be forgotten. The first reaction when we entered the school grounds was how beautiful the campus is. I loved being able to go to the school while the students were there and being able to see what a real school campus looks like. This was a good experience to have as a senior preparing to go to college."

About the conference, she commented, "The first class I attended was interesting and taught me things that I will be able to remember throughout my entire journalism career. I know that I would not be able to learn these things for a long time if I did not attend this class. This was real-world advice from someone who knows what he's talking about, and being around people who were thoroughly interested in what he was saying was something I was thankful for. It is often seen on field trips that people are just there to get out of school, so I was glad to see that the other students were there for the same purpose as mine."

She concluded by expressing feelings shared by many, "I learned more than I could have imagined on the Columbia field trip, and I am very thankful that we had the chance to go."