



Fidelity Ballmer

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About the Foothill Dragon Press

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Since its founding in 2009, the Foothill Dragon Press has been honored nationally and locally for excellence in digital journalism. The National Scholastic Press Association (NSPA) has designated the publication All-American status four times and awarded it with an Online Pacemaker, the most competitive scholastic online journalism award in the United States, in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014. The Columbia Scholastic Press Association honored the Dragon Press with a Gold Crown Award in 2012 and 2013 and a Silver Crown in 2014.

Work History

Foothill Dragon Press

Ventura, United States

Aug 2013 - Present

News Reporter

- Our mission as an online-only publication is to provide the Foothill community with accurate, responsible, thought-provoking and timely journalism.

Ventura, CA, United States

Apr 2013 - Present

News Editor

I am responsible for editing all news articles and mentoring all reporters.

Foothill Technology Girl Up

United States

Aug 2013 - Present

President

I founded a women's advocacy group called Girl Up, a branch of the UN. I advocate through political action, fundraise and educate others about a girl's right to education in developing countries.

Character Trait: Courage

This year, developing the character trait of courage has been one of the most important things I've focused on. It is extremely difficult, especially if you are shy or reserved, to walk up to someone and ask for an interview. It takes courage to tell the truth when it might negatively affect you, to face moral or ethical dilemmas head on, to ask for help and to be willing to have your articles torn apart. Being a courageous journalist also means being willing to live on the edge at all times, and being ready to dive in at a moment's notice. Through my experience this year, I've learned that I might have to turn on the "journalist" switch at any time, and my life has been changed because of it.

Awards and Accolades

National Awards

2nd place Investigative Reporting from Camayak- "New California law gives public schools more power to punish off-campus cyberbullying"

AAJA J-Camp attendee- I was accepted into AAJA's JCamp for the Summer of 2014. JCamp is a six-day intensive journalism training for high school students. Students learn from professional journalists and get hands-on training in writing, photography, television broadcasting, online media, and reporting. Sessions and workshops are led by experienced journalists from top media companies. JCamp is an all-expenses-paid program with travel, meals and lodging covered by AAJA's partners.

My Best Work: Common Core

SPECIAL REPORT: New Common Core math standards sweep into Foothill amid criticism and doubt



I interviewed a half dozen national sources to provide a nuanced and comprehensive overview of Common Core math. In addition to school sources, I interviewed Eagle Forum founder Phylis Schlafly, Stanford professor James Milgram, Common Core writer William McCallum and Mark Naison of Fordham University.

Connecticut Health I-Team Camp attendee- This summer investigative reporting workshop will provide up to 25 high school students (per camp) with the opportunity to develop investigative reporting skills in a unique workshop environment led by distinguished local and national journalists.

ASNE Youth Advisory Board Member- As ASNE's Youth Journalism Initiative plans for future programs and activities, the student advisory board members will serve as the voice of young journalists. They will let us know what is important to them and their peers. We will have an open dialogue throughout the year to share ideas and input. They'll help us promote our programs and tell us what we could be doing more of. They'll help us brainstorm new ideas for future contests on this site, as well as on social media.

Local Awards from the VC Star

1st place News Writing- "Former Foothill teacher Chris Prewitt struck fatally by car"

1st place News Series- "SPECIAL REPORT: New Common Core math standards sweep until Foothill amid criticism and doubt" and "Incoming freshmen to get new math classes as district chooses 'integrated pathway'"

Skills

Keyboarding (Rockstar)

7-9 Years Experience, (Currently in use)

I can type 99 words per minute.



Audio Editing & Soundcloud

(Expert)

<1 Years Experience, (Currently in use)

I can use Soundcloud to record audio clips or interviews from my phone, and then edit them for clarity and export them to mp3s.



HTML and CSS Coding

(Beginner)

1-2 Years Experience, (Currently in use)

Through work on Wordpress and personal practice on several coding websites, I'm beginning to understand the basics of coding.



Content Management on Wordpress

(Intermediate)

<1 Years Experience, (Currently in use)

I can effectively edit, use word-processing skills and use coding skills to manage the "backend" of our Wordpress website.



Social Media & Storify

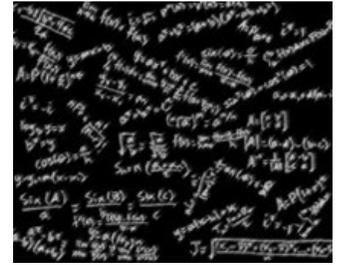
(Intermediate)

1-2 Years Experience, (Currently in use)

I know how to manage a Facebook and Twitter page, post blurbs for articles, choose SEO friendly tweets and livetweet an event. I can embed all posts and create a Storify, a feed that tells a story through social media posts.



Incoming freshmen to get new math classes as district chooses "integrated pathway"



A continuation of the Common Core series, this article focuses on the district switching to an "integrated math pathway". I interviewed district math specialist Natalie Albrizzio, Foothill assistant principal Katie Tedford and all Foothill math teachers to gain a holistic picture of the change and how it would affect students.

My Best Work: Chris Prewitt

Former Foothill teacher Chris Prewitt struck fatally by car



"I became a journalist to come as close as possible to the heart of the world." -Henry Luce

Reporting this series of articles was an amazing honor. By using data journalism, online resources and persistence, I gathered the detail of beloved teacher Chris Prewitt's death. I was also faced with many ethical and moral decisions on when to publish.

News Writing (Advanced)

1-2 Years Experience, (Currently in use)

I interview sources, do investigative reporting and organize information into fluid stories.



Interviewing (Advanced)

<1 Years Experience, (Currently in use)

I can communicate well with sources and ask coherent and pointed questions.



Community

Tutoring- I tutor 1st to 5th graders through Project Understanding at Temple Beth Torah in Ventura. I talk students through problems, helping them with homework, teaching them how to read, practicing multiplication and division tables, teaching them basic math principles and using educational tools and games. I have accumulated 100+ community service hours.

Foothill Girl Up Founder and President- In my sophomore year of highschool, I founded a women's advocacy group called Girl Up, a branch of the UN. I advocate (through political action), fundraise and educate others about a girl's right to education in developing countries.

National Speech and Debate Association- I am the Speech President of Foothill's speech and debate team. I have one first place in novice Public Forum debate and first place in Varsity Public Forum debate at the Fullerton invitational tournament. I have qualified to the California state tournament in national extemporaneous speaking for two years and international extemporaneous speaking for one year.

Counselor in Training- Every summer, I volunteer at Camp Whittier in Santa Barbara as a Counselor in Training (CIT). My responsibilities include: chaperoning children, playing games with them, planning and executing a carnival, covering counselor's shifts, running the snack stand and filling out paperwork, and doing bonding activities.

Political Action and Awareness Club- I am the master of debate for PAAC, meaning I lead all debates, help plan events and am involved in local community politics. PAAC holds 2 to 3 debates monthly on current events, such as the current political climate in Ukraine, gun control and drug dog use on campus.

Initiative

1. Being a Team Player:

Throughout my experience on the Dragon Press, the importance of collaboration and communication has become even more important to me. I strongly believe that a well-functioning newsroom needs to have everyone feel included and part of the collaboration process. Without this, reporters do not have a stake in their publication. Because of this core belief, I have consistently offered resources and advice to other students. I have also offered my support in editing and brainstorming article ideas. At my request earlier this year, peer-editing was reinstated to our workflow.

2. Breaking/Pressing News:

Throughout the year, stories will break and we automatically need someone there to report them. As a news writer, it's been difficult to always be "on duty" and never quite know when I will be needed to write a story. It's nerve-wracking, but worthwhile to dedicate myself to writing breaking news. I automatically have to take initiative and make sure the news is posted in 3 to 4 hours.

3. Investigative Reporting:

From ASB Budget Cuts to Common Core to Cyberbullying, I've fallen in love with investigative reporting this year. By deeply researching one set topic, I can provide a holistic picture of one set topic and how it affects our community. This year, I reported on the ASB Budget Cuts and shared how they would be affecting our school next year. This was the first time the ASB Budget was made public to the student body.

Foothill teachers run "Mountains2Beach" marathon for Prewitt



For this article, I attended the Ojai to Ventura "Mountains2Beach" marathon that teachers ran for Prewitt. I was forced to get out of my comfort zone and interview people who were outside of my school, which was a growing experience for me.

My Best Work: Cyberbullying Law

New California law gives public schools more power to punish off-campus cyberbullying



Frank LoMonte, executive director of the Student Press Law Center, tweeted about this article saying, "The most thorough, well-researched, nuanced story on cyberbullying law I've ever read. It's by a teenager."

Initiative: Breaking News

BREAKING NEWS: Foothill breaks record

with 697 applications
received



When Foothill broke its record for applications received, I jumped at the chance to cover my first breaking news story.