

Editors give their honest opinions to aspiring journalists at College of Communication's panel discussion

By: Lea Tran

In a packed room filled with the future generation of journalists, editors across the country came together for a panel discussion giving their honest, but optimistic, opinions on the state of the industry.

“There's never been a more exciting time to be a journalist, but also never a more scary time and simultaneously, I think never a more important time,” said Kimi Yoshino of The Baltimore Banner.

Yoshino was joined by five other editors; Audrey Cooper, Michelle Flores, Katrice Hardy, Mitch Pugh, and Stan Wischnowski in a panel facilitated by Brian McGory at Boston University's College of Communications on October 28th, 2024.

McGory had editors give their perspective from the “top” on the state of the journalism industry.

“The key word is challenged. The industry is challenged. Newspapers are dying, but journalism is thriving,” said Wischnowski of The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette.

Challenges the editors have faced include budget cuts, changing platforms, AI, and general interest in local news.

But with new challenges also comes new opportunities.

“And so we're reaching audiences, bigger audiences, in different ways, and how we make money off of that is still an issue. But I would say we need your minds,” said Hardy of the Dallas Morning News, about utilizing social media.

There was an emphasis on trying to make news more local and inclusive of the specific communities who may be reading their stories.

“There's so much coverage of (national and international issues). And I really think if we're going to get to where we save America from itself, we have to relearn how to have civic conversations that aren't just fights at each other, but really talking about the issues that affect our everyday lives,” said Cooper of WNYC.

Editors also made sure to offer advice to the room of student journalists.

“Passion and inspiration, drive, taking the initiative. And a lot of times, young journalists will come into the newsroom and they want to be narrative storytellers or investigative reporters [...] And a lot of times, what we need you to do is be accurate and meet your deadline,” said Flores of The Seattle Times.

Others echoed the same message for future journalists to stay curious as well as flexible.

“You just want to do whatever the organization needs you to do, and you're going to be all about it,” added McGory.

The event drew a crowd of over 150 students and professors. There was barely any space in the room to hold everyone.

“I definitely did enjoy it. But I do think some aspects of it were a little bit intimidating, just because, like, a lot of what the editor said was, like, very blunt and straightforward,” said Rachel Yu, a second year journalism student.

Students were able to talk to each editor after the event as well as mingle with their peers. All organizations mentioned they are currently hiring.

“So the moral of the story is, it's okay. You can get jobs in journalism. It's not as bad as your parents said,” said Cooper.