

## JENNIFER C. THOMAS

### EVIDENCE OF PARTICIPATION IN CREATIVE ACTIVITIES PRODUCER/ WRITER

### BORDER PATROL RIDE ALONG GETS REAL WHEN MIGRANT FAMILY APPEARS

### BORDERZINE Special Reports

Role: Producer / Reporter/ Writer Special  
Report on Immigration and Border Patrol  
June 2016

[Along the Border Fence in El Paso](#) is an in-depth special report on issues that affect border communities in the Southwest particular in Texas. I initially took part in this project as a fellow with the 2016 Dow Jones Multimedia Training Academy in El Paso Texas. I was selected with three other university professors to spend a day with members of the U.S. Border Patrol along the border of the U.S. and Mexico. This timely report was produced in the early summer following the election of Trump as president. My group and I had the unique opportunity to travel to the border “fence” separating El Pas from Juarez, Mexico.

During the daylong assignment, we came upon a young family of immigrants who was crossing the U.S. border illegally. With cameras rolling, I documented this emotional story with reaction from border patrol agents, business owners, and a resident who once illegally crossed the border. We also toured a “holding facility.” The topic remains one of the most significant and polarizing issues facing America.

I served as producer/reporter for the longform video mini-documentary (docu-package) project, as well as writer for the website report about the experience. In this role my duties included

- Video recording (along with other members of the team)
- Conducting all on-camera interviews for the doc-package
- Shot-sheeting all interview, and
- Writing the reporter script with edit instructions for the editor
- Recording voice track for the story
- Writing the longform online story for the website.

My entries comprised the bulk of the group’s webpage which was included in the Borderzine.com Borderlands Special Section. Additionally, the [YouTube video of my report has generated more than 125,000 views.](#)

**Pre-Production Planning:** I managed all video selection and interviews for the video report. As reporter/producer, I had to ensure that the video editor had all of the necessary scripting and graphic information. I worked alongside the editor to complete the report which was more than ten minutes under strict deadlines.

## RELEVANCE

The immigration debate and reform policies have been among the most controversial for residents, lawmakers and the U.S. courts, notably over the past few years. During the 2016 Presidential Election, then-candidate Donald Trump made “building a wall” and immigration one of his most famous and contentious platforms. That debate has reached a boiling point in the years following his election, with immigrant families and children separated and oftentimes locked in cages, and with the local and federal court systems volleying with the Trump administration over policies.

This timely report was produced in the early summer following the election of Trump as president. My group and I had the unique opportunity to travel to the border “fence” separating El Pas from Juarez, Mexico. The report included my video report and longform web story, along with an animated timeline and photo gallery from other group members.

## AWARD CONSIDERATION

The Border Patrol coverage (along with work by students from Borderzine and NYU) was entered for contests by Scripts Howard (multimedia category) and the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) New America Contest.



*U.S. Border Patrol agents apprehend an immigrant family at the U.S. border near El Paso, TX – June 2017*

Please find all supporting documents in the attached PDFs



### About BORDERZINE

We are an innovative journalism education initiative and online publishing platform that prepares young bilingual journalists for jobs in 21st century news media.

Since 2008, Borderzine.com has published rich, relevant content about the borderlands produced by multicultural student journalists at UT El Paso and our partner schools across the U.S. and Mexico.

Our reporters have covered provocative and relevant stories about national topics such as the status of immigration reform, unaccompanied minors from Central America, the impact of crime and drug violence on Ciudad Juarez and El Paso, and domestic violence protections for undocumented women. They’ve tackled regional topics such as tuberculosis, diabetes, bilingual education, and issues of language and identity, all from their unique bicultural perspective. They’ve also produced lighter fare: profiles of artists, boxers, businesspersons, politicians and human rights leaders on both sides of the Rio Grande. ([website](#))

### About the Dow Jones News Fund Multimedia Training Academy

The Dow Jones News Fund Multimedia Training Academy trains college and university journalism professors from Hispanic-serving institutions in media creation and editing for effective multimedia storytelling on the web. The participants work in teams to create multimedia story packages that are published on the bilingual border life magazine.

[Click here for more information on the 2017 DJNFMA.](#)