

JENNIFER C. THOMAS

EVIDENCE OF PARTICIPATION IN CREATIVE ACTIVITIES EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

NewsVision Live-Recorded Newscast

WHUT TV

Washington, DC

December 2016



Please find all supporting documents in the attached PDFs

Contribution and Impact

I served as the executive producer of the 30-minute December 2016 Howard University-student-produced newscast, "NewsVision News" on PBS Affiliate WHUT TV. I worked alongside a staff of twenty full-time and part-time managerial and union professionals, including engineering, operations, director and supervisors to deliver a quality-controlled broadcast which met the PBS station's stringent technical broadcast qualifications. I also wrote all promotional material and supervised the production of promos which were broadcast on WHUT. I also wrote and voiced the Show Open and video "bumpers" for news stories for WHUT.

Notably, I worked alongside MJFC Department Chair, Prof. Yanick Rice-Lamb to obtain sponsorship from NBCUniversal to pay for the costs associated with the recording of the broadcast. This show also featured a segment with Howard Law School Dean Danielle Holley-Walker regarding the university's upcoming Sesquicentennial celebration.

Some of my additional duties included:

- Spearheading meetings with the station's general manager and other management and staff
- Working with NBCUniversal officials for delivery of sponsored promos and payment
- Creating concept for Logo; working alongside Assistant Dean Nigel Martin who created the logo
- Creating concept for original music; working alongside Assistant Professor Dr. Michael Austin who created the music
- Working alongside my graduate assistant, Prof. Hussein Murad, who created the show open- providing photographs and videos for the content
- Holding Anchor Auditions- creating scripts and soliciting professors to serve as reviewers; creating audition sheets
- Creating rundown formats in Excel for students
- Formatting scripts
- Coordinating Managing schedules and rehearsals with WHUT management

Relevance

The newscast was broadcast on PBS Affiliate WHUT TV to an audience of more than 2 million viewers in the greater Washington, DC metropolitan area. The broadcast aired in December 2017. It was also posted online on WHUT's YouTube page, making it available worldwide.

The newscast, was notably sponsored by NBCUniversal, allowing students to have significant exposure to the work they contributed to the newscast. The students took on all production and editorial roles to prepare for the program taping- including directing, producing, writing, copy editing, as well as anchoring, and shooting, reporting and writing the promos and stories in the newscast.

This experience was not just groundbreaking for students who learned hands-on about the complexities and nuances of producing a professional newscast under strict deadlines, but the classroom transformed into a teaching laboratory for imparting professional skills as well as knowledge. It allowed for WHUT TV and the Cathy Hughes School of Communications to work together in a learning and professional environment. It has also set a new precedent for the department, school and university. A majority of all of the capstone (graduating seniors) students who took part in the newscast are now working in the media and credit their experience with this newscast in shaping their readiness.



Anchors Danielle Ledbetter, Cache McClay with Howard Law School Dean Danielle Holley-Walker

Challenges

This production was challenging in that WHUT did not have the technology that is standard for a news production-style broadcast. This affected the rundown creation of the show and the timing and Scripting. Both of these major show components are usually managed electronically via content management software.

As a result, I created Rundowns and Scripts in Excel and Word, and helped the student producers time the broadcast manually.



About WHUT TV

WHUT-TV, Howard University Television was founded in 1980 in Washington, D.C., as WHMM. At its inception, the station became the first public station in the United States to be licensed and operated by a historically black college and university (HBCU) - Howard University. The station broadcasts reach over 2.5 million households in a 60-mile radius. The station endeavors to underscore Howard University's overall mission in its commitment to excellence, leadership and public service. For over 35 years on air WHUT has become a leader in broadcast communications by providing quality programming for the Greater Washington, D.C., viewing community that is relevant and informative, while offering exceptional professional training in television production, engineering and management. For more information, please visit www.whut.org.