

# J-Day 2025 Sessions At A Glance

## Macky Auditorium

## Opening Session 8:30-9:30

## Closing Session 1:10-2:00

### Breakout #1 9:45 - 10:20

#### Beyond Objectivity: New Models of Journalism Ethics

Marshall Zelinger, Karla Shotts  
UMC Middle Ballroom  
GENERAL

#### Photo Composition

Alexis Bailey  
UMC East Ballroom  
PHOTOGRAPHY

#### Crafting Compelling Copy for Now and the Future

Nick Monastra  
UMC West Ballroom  
YEARBOOK

#### Trade Magazines as a Journalism Career

Jason Gerwitz  
UMC 235  
GENERAL

#### Improve Your Sports Announcing

Jeremy Goldson  
CASE E330  
BROADCAST

#### Writing for Broadcast

Patrick Moring  
CASE E422  
BROADCAST

#### Cohesive Culture: Strategies for Staff Success

Anastasia Harrison  
UMC Aspen 287/289  
GENERAL

#### Managing Multiple Mediums

Sarah Linville  
CASE W260  
GENERAL

#### Covering Breaking News

Shannah Bober  
UMC 386  
GENERAL

#### Broadcast Story Methods

Adam Dawkins  
UMC Aspen 285  
BROADCAST

#### Moments of Truth

Jessi Holis McCarthy  
Norlin Library South 201  
GENERAL

### Breakout #2 10:35 - 11:10

#### Best Frenemies: How AI Can Help (and Hurt) Your Reporting

Sean Marcus  
UMC Middle Ballroom  
GENERAL

#### Photo Storytelling

Ross Taylor  
UMC East Ballroom  
PHOTOGRAPHY

#### A Survey Saved Our Yearbook

Mackenzie Brockman  
UMC West Ballroom  
YEARBOOK

#### Local TV/Streaming News & Sports Jobs

Ashley Moore, Noah Cooper, Amanda Alicea  
UMC 235  
GENERAL

#### Be A Reporter with PBS News Student Reporting

Becky Wandel, Emily Hope Dobkin  
CASE 4th Floor Auditorium  
GENERAL

#### Streaming Service for Student Programming

Steve Weiss  
CASE E330  
GENERAL

#### Show and Tell: The Art of Storytelling

Adam Knapik, Alasyn Zimmerman  
CASE E422  
GENERAL

#### CSMA Student Board Opportunities

Anastasia Harrison  
UMC Aspen 287/289  
GENERAL

#### Covering Breaking News

Shannah Bober  
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#### Broadcast Story Methods

Adam Dawkins  
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#### Streamline & Shine: Organizational Strategies

Gina Claus  
CASE W260  
ADVISERS

### Breakout #3 11:25 - 12:00

#### Investigative Reporting Crash Course

Erin Douglas  
UMC Middle Ballroom  
GENERAL

#### Photo Storytelling

Ross Taylor  
UMC East Ballroom  
PHOTOGRAPHY

#### Everything Has It's Place: Ideas to Maximize Coverage

Tina Cleavelin, Peter Griffin  
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#### Managing Interview Documentation

Carrie Faust  
CASE E330  
GENERAL

#### Producing Effective Television Stories

Greg Luft  
CASE E422  
GENERAL

#### Writing Reviews the Rock

Seth Fine  
UMC 247  
GENERAL

#### Making Media Fun!

Jessica Hunziker  
UMC Aspen 287/289  
GENERAL

#### Yearbook, Newspaper and Broadcast Can Work Together

Scott Roberts, Matt Varca  
UMC 386  
GENERAL

#### Stop, Collaborate & Listen: 10 Tips for Leaders

Justin Daigle  
UMC Aspen 285  
GENERAL

#### CSMA Contest and Critique Roundtable

Jed Palmer, Jo Powell  
CASE W260  
ADVISERS

### Breakout #4 12:15 - 12:50

#### Stand Up for Your Rights

Ben Reed  
UMC Middle Ballroom  
GENERAL

#### Sports Photography for Storytellers

Jen Lammey  
UMC East Ballroom  
PHOTOGRAPHY

#### Inspired Design

Rebecca McGrath  
UMC West Ballroom  
YEARBOOK

#### Inside Stories of News Production

Amy Smith, Shannon Finn  
UMC 235  
GENERAL

#### Meet the Student Media

Vicky Sama & CU Media Leaders  
CASE 4th Floor Auditorium  
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#### Sports Broadcasting Q&A

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#### Moments of Truth

Jessi Holis McCarthy  
Norlin Library South 201  
GENERAL

# ***J-Day 2025 Session Descriptions***

**Breakout #1 9:45 - 10:20**

## **Beyond Objectivity: New Models of Journalism Ethics**

Marshall Zelinger, Karla Shotts

This session explores the evolving debate around whether “objectivity” is still the best guiding principle in journalism. While traditional models stressed a “both sides” approach, today’s newsrooms face new challenges: government officials who knowingly spread falsehoods, polarized audiences that expect affirmation, and a digital landscape where misinformation spreads faster than facts. We will examine what “beyond objectivity” really means—shifting from strict neutrality toward a commitment to truth, transparency, and accountability. Using real-world examples, we’ll discuss how journalists can remain fair and balanced without giving equal weight to lies. The presentation will highlight tools such as source vetting, contextual reporting, and transparent methodology to maintain credibility. Students will leave with a sharper understanding of how to navigate complex stories with accuracy and integrity, while still upholding journalism’s democratic role as a watchdog and truth-teller.

## **Photo Composition**

Alexis Bailey

This session will be full of the fun stuff... PHOTOS! Come explore sample photography to learn about what makes a photo visually appealing, interesting, full of life, and worth sharing. This session will look into elements of photography as it is used in storytelling.

## **Crafting Compelling Copy for Now and the Future**

Nick Monastra

A yearbook with no words is like TV with no sound. In this hands-on session, you’ll learn how to elevate your journalistic writing by focusing on the process—from in-depth research to effective interviewing. We’ll explore how the LQTQ (Lead, Quote, Transition, Quote) structure can guide your storytelling. Leave with practical tools to craft compelling, well-researched articles that connect with readers this year and 20 years from now.

## **Trade Magazines as a Journalism Career**

Jason Gerwitz

Journalism skills are career skills. There are numerous opportunities beyond traditional journalism outlets that are open to students with the skills learned in high school journalism classes. This session will highlight those skills and some of the non-traditional career opportunities that exist for people with the right skillset.

## **Improve Your Sports Announcing**

Jeremy Goldson

Learn some tips and approaches to broadcasting live sports that are applicable to high school students and unique to high school sports. This includes how to prepare for your broadcast like the pros do without the benefit all of their gadgetry and personal assistants, how to connect to the story while broadcasting, some essential tips for smooth interplay with your commentators, and more!

# ***J-Day 2025 Session Descriptions***

**Breakout #1 9:45 - 10:20 (continued)**

## **Writing for Broadcast**

Patrick Moring

Frequently the key to a good broadcast is the writing, but this is not like your average English class. We'll use professional and real student samples to discuss how good writing can improve your production value and what it looks like in the broadcast setting.

## **Cohesive Culture: Strategies for Staff Success**

Anastasia Harrison

In this session participants will explore feedback protocols, motivating staffers, and managing workflow. You will leave this session with tools you can use to improve your staff culture and build your program. Whether you have a small staff or a large staff, you will come away with strategies you can use to improve and strengthen your staff culture.

## **Covering Breaking News**

Shannah Bober

The scanner is screaming and breaking news is happening NOW. Do you know what to do? Learn the basics of covering breaking news including producing, reporting, and covering online.

## **Managing Multiple Media**

Sarah Linville

In this session, we'll talk about practical logistical strategies for successfully managing print, online, and social media publications for your staff. We will look at some workflow management systems and how to empower student leadership to help staffers manage and meet deadlines. This session is aimed at advisers and student editorial leadership.

## **Broadcast Story Methods**

Adam Dawkins

Tell engaging, informational, quick, and fun visual stories for broadcast and social media using the C.O.O.L., WALDOS, and 'Hey, You, See, So' methods from professional broadcast journalists.

## **Moments of Truth: Navigating Digitized History, Myths and Misinformation**

Jessi Hollis McCarthy

We all carry narratives of the past as we create and explore digital content, some shaped by factual information and others purely myth. Building on the work done in Poynter's new museum exhibit "Moments of Truth" which explores 1,000 years of journalism history, this session will look at how false history forms, how it manifests as modern disinformation and what are practical skills we can use to navigate the content we see.

# ***J-Day 2025 Session Descriptions***

**Breakout #2 10:35 - 11:10**

## **Best Frenemies: How AI can Help (and Hurt) Your Reporting**

Sean Marcus

While many people view AI as a shortcut that produces mediocre work, journalists are using AI ethically to enhance their reporting. From finding new stories in massive datasets to developing new ways to tell existing stories, we will explore how you can use AI ethically and responsibly to deliver accurate news and information to your audience. We will also discuss ethical and environmental concerns surrounding AI tools, and how to avoid missteps in AI use by keeping the human and the audience at the center of your decision making.

## **Photo Storytelling**

Ross Taylor

Session will talk about how to tell stories visually and some tips on composition and considerations on how to make visuals better.

## **Streaming Services for Student Programming**

Steve Weiss

During the past 10 years, online streaming platforms have become a major source of program delivery, including channels such as Netflix, Prime, YouTube and many others. It's also possible to create a streaming service for your school. Steve has led the way at CSU to create Ram+, a streaming service that features many types of programming, from documentaries to student podcasts, narrative films and Karaoke on a golf cart, among others. Steve will present this fun and current method of delivering student media work.

## **Local TV/Streaming News and Sports Jobs**

Ashley Moore, Noah Cooper, Amanda Alicea

Learn about all of the amazing on-air reporting/anchoring and behind-the-scenes writing jobs available in local TV/Streaming stations around the country. You'll hear from 9News sports anchor/reporter Ashley Moore and 9News producer Amanda Alicea who perform those roles daily, along with TEGNA/9News senior content recruiter Noah Cooper who hires and trains graduates for those jobs.

## **Be a Reporter with PBS News Student Reporting Lab**

Becky Wandel, Emily Hope Dobkin

PBS News Student Reporting Labs is a hands-on journalism training program for young people and their educators. Join this session to learn about how you can get involved – from learning multimedia journalism basics and producing for our podcast to pitching stories for national publication with support from professional journalists. You'll learn how student reporters are reporting on the issues that matter to them in their communities, and how you can get involved in future projects. We'll also share free resources for educators from our team: lesson plans, tutorials, training, and more.

## **A Survey Saved Our Yearbook**

Mackenzie Brockman

Take deep dive into how one survey became the lifeline for a yearbook last year! With one well thought-out survey, we got content for all people mods and several spreads. We'll also look at how you can plan and design your own survey. Bribery suggestions included to get the best results from your school.

# ***J-Day 2025 Session Descriptions***

**Breakout #2 10:35 - 11:10 (continued)**

## **Show and Tell: The Art of Storytelling**

Adam Knapik, Alasyn Zimmerman

Storytelling is more than just gathering the facts and the wide, medium, and tight shots. Adam Knapik and Alasyn Zimmerman will walk through their process of telling a compelling and memorable story from the first phone call. How to find a compelling character, where to shoot the interview, find the visuals that elevate your story and how to tell a story beyond traditional broadcast.

## **CSMA Student Board Opportunities**

Anastasia Harrison

Interested in representing your school at the state level in a state leadership capacity for journalism? If you are a returning staff member or an editor, this opportunity is for you! Come to this session to learn more about the CSMA Student Board and how to apply. We are currently looking for sophomores and juniors from across the state to join the board! If you are an adviser interested in how this can benefit your students, please attend as well.

## **Covering Breaking News**

Shannah Bober

The scanner is screaming and breaking news is happening NOW. Do you know what to do? Learn the basics of covering breaking news including producing, reporting, and covering online.

## **Broadcast Story Methods**

Adam Dawkins

Tell engaging, informational, quick, and fun visual stories for broadcast and social media using the C.O.O.L., WALDOS, and 'Hey, You, See, So' methods from professional broadcast journalists.

## **Streamline and Shine: Organizational Strategies for Advisers**

Gina Claus

This session is designed to help yearbook and broadcast advisers streamline their classroom management and enhance productivity. I will share the strategies I use for organizing physical and digital materials, and welcome you to also share your ideas as well. Having a unique organizational issue? Please ask! We can discuss it as a group and help each other find solutions to our unique settings/classes. No need to feel like an "island" any more.



# ***J-Day 2025 Session Descriptions***

**Breakout #3 11:25 - 12:00**

## **Investigative Reporting Crash Course**

Erin Douglas

How do journalists report an investigative story? How do you start an investigation? In this mini crash course, we will learn how to protect sensitive sources, rely on data and public records, discover stories in the field, fact check our reporting, and stand our ground when those who'd prefer we DON'T investigate something try to get in our way.

## **Photo Storytelling**

Ross Taylor

Session will talk about how to tell stories visually and some tips on composition and considerations on how to make visuals better.

## **Everything Has It's Place: Ideas to Maximize Coverage**

Tina Cleavelin, Peter Griffin

Whether it's strategies to increase your yearbook coverage or the latest trending topics, this session is packed with ideas that will help you include students in manageable and interesting ways.

## **Managing Interview Documentation**

Carrie Faust

Getting the quote correct is one of our most important jobs. Smoky Hill HS has created a system for capturing, transcribing, archiving, and retrieving interviews. This system helps students to write stories and document events accurately and also provides a great backup if doubts about quotes come up later.

## **Local TV/Streaming News and Sports Jobs**

Ashley Moore, Noah Cooper, Amanda Alicea

Learn about all of the amazing on-air reporting/anchoring and behind-the-scenes writing jobs available in local TV/Streaming stations around the country. You'll hear from 9News sports anchor/reporter Ashley Moore and 9News producer Amanda Alicea who perform those roles daily, along with TEGNA/9News senior content recruiter Noah Cooper who hires and trains graduates for those jobs.

## **Be a Reporter with PBS News Student Reporting Lab**

Becky Wandel, Emily Hope Dobkin

PBS News Student Reporting Labs is a hands-on journalism training program for young people and their educators. Join this session to learn about how you can get involved – from learning multimedia journalism basics and producing for our podcast to pitching stories for national publication with support from professional journalists. You'll learn how student reporters are reporting on the issues that matter to them in their communities, and how you can get involved in future projects. We'll also share free resources for educators from our team: lesson plans, tutorials, training, and more.

# ***J-Day 2025 Session Descriptions***

**Breakout #3 11:25 - 12:00 (continued)**

## **Producing Effective Television Stories**

Greg Luft

There are many different ways to distribute television and video programming, including Instagram, YouTube, Vimeo, Facebook, TikTok, Streaming Services and Broadcast TV. Regardless of the distribution channel, the elements of quality TV storytelling have more similarities than differences. This session will explore the many ways to create effective television/video programs and how to make sure they find an audience.

## **Writing Reviews That Rock**

Seth Fine

For some reason, people always think writing a good review will be easy. Everyone who has tried writing one knows it is not. Let's look at some samples to see what makes a critical review pop. We'll practice crafting some of our own hot takes, too.

## **Making Media Fun!**

Jessica Hunziker

Being in publications should be fun! In this session, participants will game-plan for the school year and develop timely and engaging strategies to keep the class enjoyable year-round. Attendees should come prepared to share what has and hasn't worked for them.

## **Yearbook, Newspaper, and Broadcast Can Work Together**

Scott Roberts, Matt Varca

Do your Yearbook, Newspaper, and Broadcast classes/clubs feel disconnected? Come learn techniques and communication tools to get them working together. We will share our experience in merging multiple publications to bond, communicate and post their work on each other's platforms.

## **Stop, Collaborate & Listen: 10 Tips For Leaders**

Justin Daigle

One of the toughest (but best) opportunities you can have is to serve as an editor or leader of a publication. Learn 10 tips to help guide you as you lead your staff to produce the best publication for your school.

## **CSMA Contest and Critique Roundtable**

Jed Palmer, Jo Powell

CSMA is updating our Best of Colorado contest categories this year. We will also be examining our critique forms and processes. Advisers and student editors are invited to this session to see a preview of the Best of Colorado categories and to give initial input on the critique process. Come with your questions and ideas.

# ***J-Day 2025 Session Descriptions***

**Breakout #4 12:15 - 12:50**

## **Stand Up For Your Rights**

Ben Reed

More than ever, the First Amendment is under attack, including the right of student journalists to express their freedom of speech. In this session, we'll take a close look at what you can and can't say and when you should stand up against censorship.

## **Sports Photography for Storytellers**

Jen Lammey

Explore the fundamentals of capturing high-impact sports images for school publications in this classroom session tailored for aspiring photographers. Students will learn the core principles of action photography, composition, exposure, and visual storytelling as they apply to journalism and yearbook coverage—no experience required.

## **Inspired Design**

Rebecca McGrath

Becoming a strong layout designer can take years to accomplish, but you can take a shortcut by finding great inspiration from professionals. Watch a demonstration on HOW to do this and then learn WHERE to look and WHAT you are looking for. It's all about the Inspo!

## **Inside Stories of News Production**

Amy Smith, Shannon Finn

What happens behind the scenes in control rooms during live news broadcasts? What is each position responsible for and what is the importance of that position? This session will go over the inner workings of a news broadcast with a chance to learn about the other side of the camera.

## **Meet the CU Student Media**

Vicky Sama

Find out how you can be a DJ, news editor, sports reporter and get hands-on experience in the student media at CU Boulder. Students from Radio 1190, the CU Independent newspaper and Sko-Buffs will be on hand to share their experiences and tell you what it's like to be a part of the CU student media.

## **Sports Broadcasting Q&A**

Jeremy Godson

This session is designed for those journalism programs who are just starting their foray into broadcasting live sporting events or are interested in what broadcasting might entail.

Every question is a good one, and we'll try to answer all of them, including the thorny technical ones!

## **You Should Be Livestreaming**

Patrick Moring

A lot of programs are trying to incorporate live streaming events into their programs. We'll talk about the benefits and difficulties that come with the livestreaming format, as well as the different methods you can use ranging from a simple iPad live stream to a multi-camera HD livestream.



# ***J-Day 2025 Session Descriptions***

**Breakout #4 12:15 - 12:50**

## **Beyond the Photo: Storytelling that Sticks**

Natalie Barnard, Kyrie Rogers

We will guide you through the process of creating an impactful and moving story. We discuss elements, step-by-step moments, how to use what you've got, and the importance of storytelling as a whole. You will learn that the photography is just the surface, and the stories are the real gold of yearbook.

## **CSMA Awards 101**

Annie Gorenstein-Falkenberg

The Colorado Student Media Association offers a variety of individual competitions in photography, broadcast, reporting, social media, and design, along with our Colorado Middle School Journalist of the Year and our High School Journalist of the Year/Greer Scholarship competitions. If you want to compete to win these honors, the work starts now. In this session, we will go over the application process, look at past winners' portfolios, and provide tips for success in each competition.

## **Yearbook, Newspaper, and Broadcast Can Work Together**

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Do your Yearbook, Newspaper, and Broadcast classes/clubs feel disconnected? Come learn techniques and communication tools to get them working together. We will share our experience in merging multiple publications to bond, communicate and post their work on each other's platforms.

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# ***J-Day 2025 Speaker Biographies***

## **Alexis Bailey**

**Yearbook Adviser**

Rampart High School

Alexis Bailey is in her 5th year as the Rampages Yearbook Adviser at Rampart High School in Colorado Springs. Her staff has won many awards through the CSMA and has competed nationally at JEA/NSPA, and has also been recognized by Walsworth Yearbooks for their outstanding work on the national scale. While she enjoys the writing and design aspect of yearbook, photography and photo-journalism are two of her passions in the field.

## **Natalie Barnard**

**Yearbook Adviser**

Mountain Vista High School

Teaching 23 years, yearbook advisor for 9 years, and is the 2025 CSMA Adviser of the Year. Nominated multiple times for the Apple Award in the Douglas County school district.

## **Shannah Bober**

**Assignment Manager**

KKTV 11 News

Shannah started producing after college and has produce shows for all day parts. The last eight years of her career have been as an assistant news director and assignment manager, helping lead the newsrooms she's working in. She's an award winning journalist for her breaking news producing and her leadership during Hurricane Michael in Florida.

## **Mackenzie Brockman**

**Associate Sales Representative**

Varsity Yearbook

Mackenzie started yearbooking in 8th grade and never stopped. While at J-Day during high school, she learned the term "photojournalist" and instantly knew that was her calling. Now, Kenzie gets to keep on helping staffs make the yearbooks of their dreams and bring her photo-journalism background into the classroom.

## **Gina Claus**

**Journalism Adviser**

Cresthill Middle School

GINA CLAUS, CJE entered the yearbook world in 2015. Since entering the yearbook world, her staff has earned several NSPA Pacemaker nominations, CSPA Silver Crowns, CSPA Gold Crown, seven years of All American, seven years All Colorado ratings and other individual state awards. She also received recognition as a 2018 JEA Rising Star.

## **Tina Cleavelin**

**Jostens Creative Accounts Manager**

Jostens Summer Yearbook Workshop

As the Senior Jostens Creative Accounts Manager, Tina Cleavelin works with advisers and staffs to produce and market their publications. She advised award-winning newspaper, yearbook and photojournalism staffs in Arizona and Oklahoma. While advising yearbook and photojournalism staffs in Arizona, she served as the Fall State Journalism Convention Director for the Arizona Interscholastic Press Association. She received the Pioneer Award from National Scholastic Press Association, Friend of Scholastic Journalism from Journalism Educator Association as well as the Friends of Journalism award from the New Mexico Scholastic Press Association and the Jostens Leadership Award.

## **Noah Cooper**

**Senior Content Recruiter**

KUSA 9News & TEGNA

Former TV News Director of KREM 2 News in Spokane, WA for 14 years, now a senior content recruiter for TEGNA who hires and trains the best journalists in the country graduating from college into their first TV/Streaming/Digital jobs across 49 different newsrooms.

# ***J-Day 2025 Speaker Biographies***

## **Justin Daigle**

### **Yearbook Adviser**

Brighton High School

Justin Daigle, MJE, advises the Reflections yearbook at Brighton High School in Colorado. Over 20 years, his students' publications have earned state and national awards including CSPA Silver and Gold Crowns, NSPA Pacemakers, and Best of Show trophies. Daigle has received the NSPA Pioneer Award (2024), CSPA Gold Key (2024), CSPA Distinguished Adviser of the Year (2024), CSMA Adviser of the Year (2009), JEA Rising Star (2010), JEA Medal of Merit (2022) and JEA H.L. Hall Yearbook Adviser of the Year (2024). He is the current JEA Vice-President.

## **Paul Daugherty**

### **Professor of Teaching**

CMDI Department of Journalism

I'm an award-winning television public affairs producer and documentary filmmaker with a TV career that spans 30 years, overlapping a 20-year teaching career at CU Boulder. I was a producer/director for Rocky Mountain PBS in Denver on shows like Colorado.Now, LifeWise, and Rocky Mountain Legacy. I'm also a nature and science documentarian with shows like Jump Steak, Zoo Keeper Journal, and Space Class. I'm the creator and faculty adviser for the award-winning student-produced series, CU Science Update.

## **Adam Dawkins**

### **Adviser, CSMA Digital Media Coordinator**

Regis Jesuit High School

Regis Jesuit HS adviser, RJTV, Raider Sports Network. CSMA Digital Media Coordinator, CJE

## **Emily Hope Dobkin**

### **Senior Manager**

PBS NewsHour Student Reporting Labs

Emily Hope Dobkin is the Senior Manager of Community Engagement at PBS NewsHour Student Reporting Labs, where she cultivates a thriving network of educators, students, and alumni. With a knack for turning connections into community, she brings 16+ years of experience sparking meaningful programs in museums, marketplaces, libraries, after-school programs, and cultural spaces nationwide.

## **Erin Douglas**

### **Climate Reporter**

Center for Environmental Journalism

Erin Douglas is a climate journalist and a 2025-2026 Ted Scripps Environmental Journalism Fellow who has been a staff writer for The Boston Globe, The Texas Tribune, and the Houston Chronicle. At the Globe, she covered climate adaptation and resilience, including sea level rise, disaster recovery, heat waves, and water quality. Prior, Erin covered climate, energy, and environmental issues in Texas. As a Scripps Fellow at the Center for Environmental Journalism at CU, she is researching and writing about the relationship between climate change and emerging infectious diseases. Her work has been recognized by the Investigative Reporters & Editors (IRE), the Society of Environmental Journalists (SEJ), and the 2022 Edward R. Murrow awards.

## **Carrie Faust**

### **Journalism Adviser**

Smoky Hill High School

Carrie Faust advises the Summit yearbook at Smoky Hill High School in Aurora, CO, and will be advising her 24th yearbook this fall. Over the years, her staffs have earned NSPA Pacemakers and CSPA Gold Crowns, as well as high critique rankings. Her yearbook staff was inducted into the NSPA Hall of Fame in spring 2025 and the Colorado Student Media Association Hall of Fame in 2018. She served on the board of the Journalism Education Association for over 10 years and is the former president of the CSMA. She has earned a Gold Key from CSPA, and has been recognized with JEA's Distinguished Adviser and Medal of Merit and NSPA's Pioneer Award. Carrie presents at conferences and camps around the country each year and loves helping staffs find and finesse their themes.

## **Seth Fine**

### **Adviser**

Cherry Creek High School

Seth Fine has been advising high school journalism programs for over 20 years. He is always learning from his students who continue to produce award-winning work.

# ***J-Day 2025 Speaker Biographies***

## **Shannon Finn**

Chief Engineer

KRDO

Working in television and news is a long time passion. Shannon started working in the industry in 1998. He has worked in several stations in all different market sizes. He has done everything from run MCO to becoming the chief engineer. Shannon's love for television and news runs deep, he once left the business to become an electrician but ended up coming back because he missed it. The skills he learned as an electrician helped Shannon further his career by moving into the engineering side of the industry.

## **Jason Gerwitz**

Editor/Publisher

SportsTravel Magazine

Jason Gewirtz is the editor/publisher of SportsTravel Magazine and the vice president/managing director of the Northstar Meetings Group Sports Division, which organizes the TEAMS Conference & Expo and other sports industry business conferences. He started at SportsTravel in 2008 as managing editor after a career as a news reporter and editor at daily newspapers. He worked as a reporter and city editor at the Press-Telegram in Long Beach, California, and as a reporter at the Daily Camera in Boulder and the Broomfield Enterprise in Broomfield. He graduated from the University of Colorado with a journalism degree.

## **Jeremy Goldson**

Sports Broadcasting Teacher/Producer

Mountain Vista High School

Mr. Goldson is the Sports Broadcasting Teacher/Producer and Theatre Director at Mountain Vista High School. Prior to teaching he worked as a radio commentator, play-by-play announcer, and sports director. He has degrees from Oberlin College and Roosevelt University. He is a rabid sports and sports media fan.

## **Annie Gorenstein-Falkenberg**

Yearbook Adviser

Longmont High School

ANNIE GORENSTEIN-FALKENBERG, CJE, advises the Priam yearbook at Longmont (Colorado) H.S. and is the Colorado State Director for JEA. During her time as an adviser, her students have won numerous state awards, and the Priam yearbook was inducted into the CSMA All Colorado Hall of Fame in 2022. Annie has been honored as a Colorado Student Media Association Teacher of the Year (2017), JEA Rising Star (2015), JEA Special Recognition Adviser (2019), JEA Distinguished Adviser (2022), and JEA Medal of Merit Recipient (2025).

## **Peter Griffin**

Yearbook Representative

Jostens

Peter Griffin began his yearbook career at 22 years old and continues after 20 years to enjoy his job as a Jostens yearbook specialist. He received the Friends of Journalism award from the Journalism Education Association as well as earned the Jostens Representative of the year award twice. His staffs continually earn state and national awards as well as please their students and communities.

## **Anastasia Harrison**

Yearbook Adviser

Legend High School

Anastasia Harrison, MJE, advises the Epic yearbook at Legend HS. Her students' publications have earned state and national awards including CSPA Silver Crowns and an NSPA Pacemaker as well as Pacemaker finalist nominations. Harrison was honored with the JEA Rising Star award in 2011 and was the Colorado Student Media Association Adviser of the Year for 2016. Harrison is the current Colorado Student Media Association President.

# ***J-Day 2025 Speaker Biographies***

## **Jessi Hollis McCarthy**

**Program Specialist**

Poynter Institute

Jessi Hollis McCarthy is the program specialist of MediaWise, Poynter's digital media literacy project that teaches people of all ages how to spot misinformation online. Jessi has led media literacy education programs in over a dozen countries and six continents reaching students, educators, journalists and civil society leaders. She is the 2023 recipient of the Elizabeth Thoman Service Award from the National Association for Media Literacy Education.

## **Jessica Hunziker**

**Adviser**

Castle View High School

Jessica Hunziker, MJE advises yearbook and newsmagazine at Castle View High School in Castle Rock, Colo. Hunziker's staffs have earned numerous awards including the All-Colorado Hall of Fame, NSPA's Best of Show yearbook and newspapers, and CSPA yearbook/newspaper Crowns. Hunziker was a 2014 JEA Rising Star, 2018 CSMA Adviser of the Year and 2019 JEA Special Recognition Yearbook Adviser. She also serves as the JEA Journalist of the Year coordinator and has an MA in Journalism from Kent State.

## **Adam Knapik**

**Chief Photographer**

KOAA-TV

KOAA Chief Photographer Adam Knapik is a seasoned photographer with over 30 years in the industry. Born and raised in Detroit. Prior to News5, Adam worked for Royal Caribbean International aboard some of the largest cruise ships in the world while managing the in-house television systems. The experience took him all over the world, working with amazing people while appreciating adventures our world has to offer. There isn't much he hasn't done, including covering local and national stories with an impact on the people of Southern Colorado. Among his favorites is a trip to the White House for an interview with President Barack Obama, covering major tornadoes in Oklahoma and Nebraska and the destruction brought to the Texas gulf coast by Hurricane Harvey. He has also won a few awards along the way.

## **Jen Lammey**

**Media Arts Teacher**

Mead High School

In the five years I have been at Mead, the enrollment in the photography program has doubled. Many photography graduates have gone on to pursue photography as a career. Students have won multiple awards in the Society for Photographic Education Youth Showcase Competition.

## **Sarah Linville**

**Newspaper Adviser, Teacher**

Heritage High School

Sarah Linville teaches Language Arts and advises The Pioneer, the student news publication at Heritage High School. She earned her B.A. in English and Secondary Education from Palm Beach Atlantic University and her M.A. in English and American Studies from the University of Oxford. Now in her third year as adviser, Sarah loves helping student journalists find their voices and tell meaningful stories—a process that's especially close to her heart, since she also spent three years on The Pioneer staff as a high school student herself.

## **Greg Luft**

**Professor**

Colorado State University

Greg Luft is a Professor of Journalism and Media Communication at Colorado State University. He is a former television news reporter, documentary producer and department administrator at CSU.

## **Sean Marcus**

**Interactive Learning Designer**

MediaWise/Poynter

As the Interactive Learning Designer for MediaWise, Sean Marcus designs and develops learning material for a wide range of audiences and purposes, ranging from senior citizens to high school students, and traditional classroom lessons to asynchronous, online learning experiences. Sean spent over 20 years teaching high school in Tampa Bay. He has taught journalism, television production, creative writing and graphic design, and advised nationally recognized publications. As a lifelong learner, he has pursued learning opportunities ranging from bookbinding and letterpress printing to digital citizenship and internet safety.



# ***J-Day 2025 Speaker Biographies***

## **Rebecca McGrath**

**Yearbook Representative**

Varsity Yearbooks

Getting “voluntold” to advise yearbook as a first-year teacher was a blessing in disguise for Rebecca. She fell in love with the process of helping students capture the priceless moments and memories of the year, and then never looked back. Still an educator at heart, Rebecca loves teaching design, theme development, copywriting... really ALL of the yearbook skills, and she feels lucky to still be doing her dream job, 23 years later.

## **Nick Monastra**

**Sales Representative**

Walsworth Yearbooks

For 19 years as an Educator and Yearbook Representative, I've enjoyed supporting individuals and teams through the creative journey. From brainstorming and concept development to distribution of the finished product, I love offering insights and helping people bring their vision to reality. Using a creative and hands-on approach, I hope to help students create stories that capture their unique perspective and offer a true reflection of their school community. When not immersed in the world of education, you can find me exploring with my family, writing or cheering on the fighting Denver Broncos.

## **Ashley Moore**

**Prep Sports Journalist**

KUSA 9News

High school sports reporter/anchor for KUSA 9News in Denver who holds undergrad degree from University of Houston and Masters degree from Syracuse University

## **Patrick Moring**

**Broadcast Adviser**

Rampart High School

Patrick Moring is Past President of the Colorado Student Media Association and in his 18th year of advising the award-winning Rampart High School KRAM broadcast program in Colorado Springs. He was the JEA Special Recognition Broadcast Advisor in 2019, the Distinguished Broadcast Advisor in 2021, and the JEA Broadcast Advisor of the Year in 2022. He is a frequent presenter and lead judge for the JEA and the NSPA. He is also a Star Wars nerd, but his wife still loves him, so he is ok with it.

## **Jed Palmer**

**Executive Director**

Colorado Student Media Association

Jed Palmer, CJE, is the Executive Director for the Colorado Student Media Association. He spent 29 years as a classroom teacher, with 22 years of journalism advising. He advised yearbook, print news, online news, broadcast, and literary magazine. He was the 2013 Colorado Adviser of the Year and a 2013 JEA Distinguished Adviser. Additional recognitions include the NSPA Pioneer Award, a JEA Medal of Merit, and the JEA Lifetime Achievement Award. His publications and students were state and national award winners and are in the CSMA All-Colorado Hall of Fame and the NSPA All-American Hall of Fame. The Eagle Eye View Yearbook was also included in the Pacemaker 100.

## **Jo Powell**

**Yearbook Adviser, CSMA Board Member**

Pine Creek High School

Jo Powell is the yearbook adviser at Pine Creek High School. She is excited to serve as the CSMA Contest and Critique Coordinator. Although she's been advising student journalism for over 20 years, she feels she still learns something new each year that helps students improve their yearbook, online news, or video productions.

# ***J-Day 2025 Speaker Biographies***

## **Ben Reed**

### **MoHi Media Adviser**

Monarch High School

Ben Reed advises Newspaper, Yearbook, Broadcast, and Online Media at Monarch High School. His staffs have collected numerous national and state awards, including the NSPA Pacemaker and induction into the CSMA Hall of Fame. Colorado's Adviser of the Year in 2021, he also has a deep passion for defending the rights of student journalists.

## **Scott Roberts**

### **Broadcast Adviser**

Grandview High School

Scott Roberts has been a broadcast adviser for 5 years. He has degrees from CU Boulder and Grand Canyon University. Before teaching he worked in radio and television across multiple companies and mediums for 5 years.

## **Kyrie Rogers**

### **Storytelling Editor**

Mountain Vista High School

Creative Writing Club President at Mountain Vista High School, main storytelling yearbook editor, years of writing experience. Presentation and teaching skills used for 3 years.

## **Vicky Sama**

### **Director of Student Media**

Journalism Department, Univ. of Colorado, Boulder  
Vicky Sama is the director of student media and teaches Media Law and Ethics and Intermediate Reporting classes. She is a former television war journalist and competitive athlete. She enjoys working with students in the various media outlets at CU.

## **Karla Shotts**

### **Adviser**

Englewood High School

Karla Shotts is the Vice President of the CSMA and has 12 years of experience advising in the classroom, teaching Broadcasting, yearbook, and journalism. This time in the classroom follows nearly 30 years as a professional broadcast journalist working in eight markets nationwide.

## **Amy Smith**

### **Engineer/Operations Manager**

KRDO TV

Working in television and news is a long time passion. Amy started working in the industry in 1994. During that time she has worked at 3 television stations in 2 different markets and various positions from MCO, camera operator, editor, director, audio op, production / operations manager and engineer. Working under daily deadlines and pressure is an environment that Amy thrives in, it can be both exhausting and rewarding. Amy is excited to share her knowledge and love for the television journalism industry with younger generations.

## **Ross Taylor**

### **Associate Professor**

University of Colorado Boulder

Ross Taylor is an associate professor in the journalism department in CMDI. Previous to academia, he was a photojournalist for 20 years and his awards include National Photographer of the Year. His website is: [www.rosstaylor.com](http://www.rosstaylor.com).

## **Matt Varca**

### **Yearbook and Newspaper Adviser**

Grandview High School

Matt Varca has been advising student journalism for over 16 years. The Grandview Chronicle and The View yearbook have consistently produced award winning content.

## **Becky Wandel**

### **Youth Media Producer**

PBS News Student Reporting Labs

Becky Wandel is a Youth Media Producer who has been with the PBS News Student Reporting Labs team for 6 years. She is from the Boston area and graduated from the University of Massachusetts Amherst with a degree in Journalism and concentrations in French and English. Having worked as a writing tutor, theater educator, and radio news director, Becky has a passion for spreading effective and creative communication skills as widely as possible and loves working with young people. She is now the lead producer for Student Reporting Labs' teen life podcast, On Our Minds.

# ***J-Day 2025 Speaker Biographies***

## **Steve Weiss**

### **Master Instructor**

Colorado State University, Journalism and Media

Steve Weiss is a master instructor and a recent winner of the Colorado State University Best Teacher Award. He has more than 30 years of experience reporting for television news, producing corporate video programs, and more recently, producing documentaries for Rocky Mountain PBS and KBDI-12 in Denver. Weiss teaches a variety of courses at CSU including production, scriptwriting and live video production for sports and the arts.

## **Marshall Zelinger**

### **Political Reporter**

NBC

Marshall Zelinger has spent 25 years honing his craft in Colorado. He joined 9NEWS in January 2017 after having worked for 7 years at Denver's KMGH. Before that, Marshall worked at KRDO in Colorado Springs from 2004 until 2010. Marshall began his journalism career in Chico, California in May 2003. Marshall graduated from the University of Colorado at Boulder in 2002 with a degree in journalism!

## **Alasyn Zimmerman**

### **Investigative Reporter**

KOAA-TV

Alasyn Zimmerman is an Investigative Reporter with KOAA-TV in Colorado Springs, CO. In addition to her investigations, she's led the station's election coverage since 2020 and garnered awards from the Colorado Broadcaster's Association including "Best Public Affairs Reporting", "Best Use of New Media", and "Best Specialty Reporter". She began her journalism career in Idaho Falls, ID. Zimmerman is originally from Wichita, KS, and has a Journalism degree from the University of Colorado Boulder.

# ***J-Day 2025 Tour Descriptions***

All tours will meet and leave from the North Patio of the UMC building. Look for CU staff or students holding the corresponding tour signs.

## **CU Boulder Campus Tour**

Session 1 meets at 9:45

Session 3 meets at 11:25

Take a guided tour with a current CU student to see campus highlights, including our state-of-the-art fitness and wellness center, beautiful open spaces, a residence hall and more.

## **CU Boulder Athletic Facility Tour**

Tour 1 meets at 9:45

Tour 2 meets at 11:25

**\*\*Ticket Required\*\***

This tour is limited in participation numbers.

Adviser ticket requests were previously requested and tickets were included in adviser registration materials.

## **ATLAS Studio Tour and Green Screen On-Camera Performance**

Paul Daugherty, all four breakout sessions

We'll fire up the studio and show you our virtual sets. Read from our teleprompter and develop skills as an anchor or TV presenter. Get a tour of our facility to show you what our students learn.

## **CMDI Facilities Tour (two options)**

Session 3 meets at 11:25. Session 4 meets at 12:15.

Option 1: This is a media-focused tour with stops at the radio station, podcast booths and broadcast studio.

Option 2: This is a design-focused tour exploring our Environmental Design building.

These experiences will be available throughout the day. Locations specific to the experience.

## **Visit Boulder**

During all Breakout sessions

The Boulder Convention and Visitors Bureau will be on site with local information. Their booth will be located on the South Patio area of the UMC building.

## **Alienware Esports Lounge**

During all Breakout sessions

The Buffalo Esports and Gaming Lounge will be open for tours. This gaming facility includes gaming stations, training, and a broadcast studio. Located on the first floor of the UMC building.

## **Moments of Truth Exhibit**

Breakout sessions 2 and 3 in

Norlin Library South 201

As part of the Poynter 50th anniversary celebration, The Moments of Truth Exhibit is a national traveling exhibit that navigates journalism's history and future. This exhibit traces the evolution of journalism and highlights its vital role in defending democracy and combating false information.

# ***J-Day 2025 Sponsor Tables***

Several of our sponsor organizations will have tables set up throughout common spaces in the UMC building. Stop by these tables to thank our sponsors, to ask questions, and to get information about their programs and services.

# Thank You to Our 2025 Sponsors

## GOLD



**JOURNALISM AND  
MEDIA COMMUNICATION**  
**COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY**

## SILVER



**Leeds** School of Business  
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **BOULDER**

## BRONZE

