

BETH WALTON BRAAKSMA

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PROFESSIONAL REPORTING EXPERIENCE:

Social Issues Reporter, Asheville Citizen-Times, Gannett Company, Asheville, NC, Oct. '14 to current

- Reports on race relations, sexuality, gender, poverty, nonprofit and governmental social services in Southern Appalachia
- Awarded 2015 H.F. Guggenheim Reporting Fellowship for continued coverage of race and policing
- Awarded 2015 Equal Voice Journalism Fellowship to cover the intersection of race on poverty in Western North Carolina
- Responsible for weekly long-form enterprise features, short news dailies, Sunday column and briefs
- Cultivates and maintains a diverse base of sources for investigative and enterprise work
- Uses social media regularly to find, source and enhance stories
- Analyzes metrics to grow readership and personal branding

Staff Writer, Group Tour Media, Holland, MI, Feb. to May '12

- Wrote and edited cover stories, blogs and travel news between Peace Corps assignments for a travel industry media company
- Created print and online media packages, including interactive audio and visual content highlighting global destinations
- Assembled regional and international travel itineraries for group tour operators

Staff Writer, City Pages, Voice Media Group, Minneapolis, MN, Jan. '08 to Jan. '09

- Pitched and published cover stories, lifestyle features, news and blogs at Minneapolis' alternative newsweekly
- Awarded first place for short form news writing by the Association of Alternative Newsmedia (large circulation category); articles republished in *Best AltWeekly Writing 2009 and 2010*, Northwestern University Press
- Reviewed legal and financial documents, providing verifiable data for investigative work
- Developed multimedia news and feature packages for online content

Crime Reporter, Las Vegas Review-Journal, Stephens Media, Las Vegas, NV, Jul. to Dec. '07

- Wrote daily news, features and briefs on deadline for Nevada's largest daily newspaper, covering crime, traffic and fire
- After a three month paid internship, hired and given a 35 percent raise to work as paper's temporary night police beat reporter; offered full time reporting job and additional raise one month later
- Conducted investigative research and legal document review
- Developed and maintained a large source-base for investigative work

General Assignment Intern Reporter, USA Today, Gannett Company, McLean, VA, May to Aug. '06

- Selected as one of four newsroom interns for a competitive summer internship at a national daily newspaper
- Wrote features, news and briefs on deadline, including two front-page stories
- Researched national trends and conducted relevant interviews
- Secured post internship freelance work for *USA Today* and the *Gannett News Service*

General Assignment Reporter, The Holland Sentinel, Morris Communications, Holland, MI, Oct. '04 to Dec. '05

- Wrote daily news, features and briefs on deadline for local daily paper, covering city councils and area schools
- Authored weekly "Neighbors" column, highlighting local leaders and active community members

Editorial Intern, The American Prospect Magazine, Washington, D.C, Aug. to Dec. '03

- Wrote online content for the progressive political journal
- Reviewed submissions, copy edited and fact-checked articles
- Co-coordinated the broadcast of the New American Strategies and Securities for Peace Foreign Policy Conference

OTHER RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

National Coordinator, Stomping Out Malaria in Africa, United States Peace Corps, Rwanda, Jul. '13 to Jun. '14

- Oversaw the work of 22 regional malaria volunteers and the development of the STOMP Rwanda Program
- Mobilized volunteer malaria prevention and control work nationwide, increasing activity by 42 percent
- Used social media, online resource sharing, targeted communication and bilingual training to inspire action
- Collaborated with an international team of malaria experts to reach global malaria elimination goals
- Developed monitoring and evaluation frameworks for impact assessment and programmatic growth
- Authored proposals and secured grant money for national malaria prevention and control projects

Volunteer, United States Peace Corps, Rwanda, May '12 to Oct. '13; Kazakhstan, Mar. to Nov. '11

- Taught healthy living and sports to 90+ Rwandan secondary school students at a village school
- Integrated preventative health practices and education into community services at a rural Rwandan health center
- Taught English as a Second Language to adult and student learners in Kazakhstan
- Trained English teachers in new methodologies to promote positive changes in the Kazakh classroom
- Directed a week long Girls Leading Our World (GLOW) Camp for 100+ participants

Regional Development Specialist, Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, Jan. '09 to Feb. '11

- Developed and maintained donor relations for a statewide, \$10 million nonprofit agency
- Oversaw fundraising activities for eight counties, authoring grants and proposals and securing major donor funds (\$20,000+)
- Spoke publically to community organizations and civic groups to mobilize and energize support
- Wrote and designed press releases, website copy, brochures, fundraising letters and e-blasts
- Selected as a team leader for companywide strategic learning process mandated by Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.
- Planned and implemented large fundraising galas and small donor recognition events

Writing Teacher and Consultant, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI, Aug. '05 to May '07

- Taught English 100 for underperforming first-year students
- Tutored undergraduate, graduate and special needs students as a university writing center consultant
- Created specific methods for working with remedial, international and visually-impaired students
- Trained new consultants and course tutors to successfully teach rhetorical and grammatical concepts to writers

Community Health Intern, Planned Parenthood of South Central Michigan, Kalamazoo, MI, Aug. '06 to May '07

- Co-wrote and initiated a university program to decrease sexually transmitted infections and unintended pregnancies
- Trained collegiate resident advisers to better support students' sexual and reproductive health
- Developed a monitoring and evaluation framework to measure the program's effectiveness during its pilot year

Public Relations and Marketing Intern, The Center for Women in Transition, Holland, MI, May to Aug. '03

- Wrote and designed press releases, brochures and newsletters for sexual assault and domestic violence prevention
- Assisted in developing the nonprofits' website, providing and editing copy
- Served as a crisis volunteer, offering immediate support to victims in emergency situations

EDUCATION

Master of International Development and Administration, Department of Political Science, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI, April 2007, GPA: 3.82

Concentration: Health Policy and Leadership

Independent Research Project: *International Family Planning: When Domestic Politics Interfere*

Bachelor of Liberal Arts, Albion College, Albion, MI, April 2004

Majors: English and Women's Studies; Minor: Journalism

Washington Semester, American University, Washington, D.C., December 2003

Area of Study: Print Journalism

Independent Research Project: *How Women Changed War: The Role of Female War Correspondents*

TECHNICAL COMPETENCIES

Experienced in basic website design, HTML and content management systems; search engine optimization; brand development and content marketing; social media; digital photography and multimedia; graphic design; and various news editing and publishing software, including Adobe Photoshop, Pagemaker, InDesign and QuarkXPress.

AWARDS, ASSOCIATIONS AND HONORS

Equal Voice Journalism Fellow, Marguerite Casey Foundation (2015); H.F. Guggenheim Reporting Fellow, John Jay College's Center on Media, Crime and Justice (2015); United States Peace Corps Volunteer (2011- 2014); Rotary International (2010-2011); First place for short form news writing, Association of Alternative Newsmedia (2009); *USA Today's* Hainer Award (2006); Managing Editor, *The Pleiad*, Albion College's student newspaper (2003); Editor-in-Chief, *The Albionion*, Albion College's yearbook (2002); Vice President of Foundation and Philanthropy for Delta Gamma Fraternity (2001); Recipient of several academic scholarships and financial awards (2000-2007).