

# JOHN A. DILLON

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## EDUCATION

Scripps Howard Academic Leadership Academy, Louisiana State University, 2007

Newsroom Executives course, American Press Institute, 1995

Master of Arts, mass communication, University of Minnesota, 1974. Thesis papers (option of two shorter papers): “Leadership in the Newsroom: A New Approach” and “A Study of the Right of Freedom of Expression on Quasi-Public Property.”

Bachelor of Arts, major in journalism, Creighton University, 1969

## CURRENT POSITION

Senior lecturer of journalism, College of Communications, The Pennsylvania State University, since 2007

Director, Dow Jones News Fund Center for Editing Excellence at Penn State, since 2010

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Virginia Commonwealth University School of Mass Communications, adjunct instructor, spring semester 2007

Richmond Times-Dispatch, Richmond, Virginia:

**Deputy managing editor for metro news, Virginia news and special projects 2005-2006.** Responsible for the direction and performance of 65 reporters and editors covering local and state news, including explanatory and investigative projects. Also responsible for hiring interns and recruiting.

- Created popular blogs on TimesDispatch.com that conveyed news effectively and increased user visits to the site.

- Conceived, advocated for and wrote the business plan for Brick, a new alternative weekly aimed at readers and advertisers not reached by the Times-Dispatch. Found the person who was hired as Brick's editor.
- Created, with the advertising department, pages zoned for news and advertising twice weekly inside the newspaper's Metro section. The pages consistently exceeded expected ad revenue.
- Oversaw and edited numerous award-winning reporting projects.

**Deputy managing editor for business news, copy desk, photography, research library and administration 1994-2004.** Responsible for the direction and performance of 56 employees. Also responsible for preparing and managing a multimillion-dollar news department budget, the intern program and recruiting.

- Led the photo department in converting from film to digital cameras, one of the first newspapers in the country to do so. Changed the culture in the photo department and the rest of the news department to improve cooperation and coordination and make better use of photos, resulting in an increase in award-winning photography.
- Reduced the size of the research library staff while improving its efficiency and changing its culture to focus on customer service instead of archiving.
- Established the news department's reputation with the controller as having the company's best prepared and best managed budget.

1992-1993: Assistant managing editor for administration

1984-1991: Special assignments editor

1982-1984: Assistant city editor

1981-1982: Business news reporter

1978-1981: Feature writer

1975-1978: Copy editor

**As Times-Dispatch internship coordinator and recruiter (1991-2006):**

- Interviewed and hired more than 110 college interns. Process involved interviewing four times that number in person, at job fairs or by phone, and reading more than 3,000 resumes and thousands of clips.
- Recruited at minority job fairs each year, including two Unity convention job fairs, three National Association of Black Journalists convention job fairs, and one Asian-American Journalists Association convention job fair. Hired full-time and part-time staffers and interns from those job fairs.
- Organized two Virginia Press Association minority job fairs during five-year term as co-chairman of the VPA's Diversity Committee.
- Recruited at Howard University, Norfolk State University, the University of Maryland, James Madison University and Virginia Commonwealth University.

- Maintained alliances with the Dow Jones Newspaper Fund copy-editing internship program, the National Association of Black Journalists intern program, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science science-writing fellowship program. Helped mentor AAAS graduate science students at the Times-Dispatch each summer.
- Mentored three Middle Eastern journalism students at the Times-Dispatch for six weeks through a Virginia Commonwealth University program, 2004 and 2005.
- Mentored top local high school students attached to the Times-Dispatch through special programs, 1991-2005.
- Former Times-Dispatch interns work at news organizations throughout the country. Among the larger ones: the Times-Dispatch (one is now chief of the copy desk), Los Angeles Times, The Boston Globe, Baltimore Sun, Seattle Times, Fort Worth Star-Telegram, Dallas Morning News, The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, Dow Jones News Service and The Associated Press.

**Copy editor, Minneapolis Tribune**, summer 1974.

**Copy editor, Rockford Register-Republic**, Rockford, Ill., summer 1973.

**Reporter, Rockford Morning Star**, 1969.

#### PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

**Judge, Society of Professional Journalists Sigma Delta Chi Awards**, 2011, 2012.

**Organizer, American Copy Editors Society Regional Conference**, Nov. 13, 2010, Penn State University. The daylong conference drew about 60 professionals and students and included six sessions on different topics.

**Chairman, Virginia Press Association News Committee**, 2003-2006. Led statewide committee that planned the program and training for the annual convention of publishers, editors and staff. Brought in such speakers as former New York Times Managing Editor Gerald Boyd (following the Jason Blair episode), Washington Post White House correspondent Mike Allen (following the 2004 election) and New Orleans Times-Picayune Managing Editor Peter Kovacs (following Hurricane Katrina).

**Times-Dispatch liaison for Northwestern University's Readership Institute** during its study of newspaper practices and culture for ASNE and NAA, 1999-2003. Coordinated surveys and data-gathering for the Times-Dispatch, one of the 100 papers studied in-depth. Attended institute meetings at Northwestern and led implementation of the findings and recommendations at the Times-Dispatch.

**Co-chairman, Virginia Press Association Diversity Committee, 1995-2000.**

Organized this committee in 1995 to work on diversity awareness initiatives at the state level, including VPA/NAA/ASNE minority job fairs and diversity training seminars. Putting on job fairs required raising sponsorship funds from NAA, ASNE and Virginia's larger newspapers.

**Member, Virginia Commonwealth University School of Mass Communications Advisory Board, 1991-1997.**

- Conceived the student-run Capital News Service to serve Virginia's weekly and small daily newspapers and worked with professors to establish it. Capital News Service selects top journalism students to cover the annual winter session of the General Assembly and write for the newspapers to which they are assigned. Students work with the faculty member who directs the program and with the editors of their assigned newspapers.
- Served on the committee that established the Virginia Communications Hall of Fame at VCU and created the induction ceremony and dinner as a fund-raiser for the School of Mass Communications.
- Served on the search committee for director of the school in 1993.

**President, Society of Professional Journalists, Virginia Professional Chapter, 1992;** board member 1990-1993. Organized SPJ Region 2 conferences in Richmond in April 1994 and in Fredericksburg in April 2003. (Region 2 includes North Carolina, Virginia, Washington, D.C., Maryland and Delaware.) Putting on the conferences required raising funds from sponsoring groups and budgeting correctly in order to leave seed funds for the next conference; this was done successfully.

**Board member, SPJ Educational Foundation of the Virginia Professional Chapter, 1992-1993.** Helped raise funds from professional journalists and news organizations throughout the state to increase the investments from which annual scholarships were given to top journalism students in the state.

**Liaison and primary mentor for foreign journalists visiting the Times-Dispatch** for periods of from two to six weeks, usually from programs organized by Freedom House or the International Center for Journalists, both in Washington. Journalists came from countries including Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Russia, Lebanon, Turkey, Germany, South Korea, Japan, Scotland, Nigeria, Kenya and France.

HONORS AND AWARDS

**World Affairs Journalism Fellowship, 2002.** Awarded one of the first 10 fellowships in this nationally competitive program sponsored by the International Center for Journalists and the World Affairs Councils of America. Fellowship supported a week-long orientation on foreign reporting in Washington in October and a three-week

reporting project on U.S.-Russian trade in Moscow and St. Petersburg in November. Work published in the Times-Dispatch as a series titled "Why did the chicken cross the Atlantic?" Feb. 16-18, 2003. Also in 2003, judged the 2003 fellowship applicants.

**Leadership Metro Richmond, Class of 2000.** Chosen by the Richmond Times-Dispatch for this selective nine-month program for community leaders.

## PRESENTATIONS

Moderator, "Compete and/or collaborate," panel discussion at Pennsylvania Press Conference, State College, Pa., May 21, 2011.

"Interviewing techniques," for staff of AccuWeather, State College, Pa., June 22, 2010.

Panel member, "Online hyperlocal," Pennsylvania Press Conference, Harrisburg, Pa., May 15, 2010.

Panel member, "How to survive a job interview," American Copy Editors Society national conference, Philadelphia, April 16, 2010.

Panel member, "Entrepreneurship in the Internet Age: Opportunities for Young Professionals," Penn State University, Nov. 16, 2009.

Bellefonte Area High School journalism classes, "Highlights of my journalism career," May 22, 2008.

Associated Press Sports Editors Regional Conference, "Becoming a better manager," Penn State University, Dec. 3, 2007.

Virginia College Editors Conference, "Getting internships and your first job," Virginia Tech, Oct. 14, 2006.

Virginia College Editors Conference, "Getting internships and your first job," James Madison University, Nov. 19, 2005.

"What journalism is all about," half-day seminar for Muslim college students in Richmond, Aug. 20, 2005.

"Using unnamed sources – pros and cons," to the Virginia Home School debating organization, Richmond, Aug. 20, 2005.

American Press Institute, presenter on "Reinventing your food section," June 9, 2005.

Presentation on ethics to Media General editors and television news directors, presented as a member of the MG Ethics Team, in Tampa Dec. 7, 2004, and in Richmond March 23, 2005.

American Press Institute, presenter on readership changes, July 29, 2003.

“How the Times-Dispatch works,” to the Leadership Metro Richmond class of 2000, fall 2000.

“Careers in print journalism,” James Madison University, Feb. 24, 2000.

Presenter, Journalism Short Course, Hampton University, Nov. 18, 1998.

Presentation at the annual Washington and Lee University ethics seminar, Nov. 13-14, 1998.

Presentation on careers to the staff of the Flat Hat student newspaper, College of William and Mary, Nov. 12, 1997.

Taught ethics session at the annual Times-Dispatch High School Editors Workshop most years since 1998.

Guest lecturer occasionally over more than 15 years at the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Mass Communications for classes of professors Wilma Wirt, June Nicholson and Clarence Thomas and adjuncts Greg Gilligan and Ron Carrington.

Guest lecturer for professional-in-residence class on opinion writing organized by Associate Professor Wilma Wirt, School of Mass Communications, Virginia Commonwealth University, 1991, 1992, 1993. Taught a week of commentary writing and a week of analysis writing during the semester.

#### SEMINAR PARTICIPATION

Digital media conference, University of Maryland, Oct. 27-29, 2011

American Copy Editors Society annual conference, Phoenix, March 17-19, 2011

AEJMC annual conference, Denver, Aug. 4-7, 2010

American Copy Editors Society annual conference, Philadelphia, April 16-17, 2010

AEJMC annual conference, Boston, Aug. 4-8, 2009

American Copy Editors Society annual conference, Minneapolis, April 30-May 2, 2009

Online News Association annual conference, Washington, D.C., Sept. 12-13, 2008

ASNE/NEXPO annual convention, Washington, D.C., April 12-16, 2008

AEJMC annual conference, Washington, D.C., August 2007

Summer Institute on Teaching and Learning, Virginia Commonwealth University Center for Teaching Excellence, May 14-18, 2007

Newspaper Association of America workshop on “Disruptive Innovation,” part of NAA’s Journalism Next initiative, May 10, 2006

American Society of Newspaper Editors seminar on implementing the latest Readership Institute findings, Tampa, April 25-26, 2005

NAA conference on readership, Washington, D.C., April 19-20, 2004

Virginia Freedom of Information Act conference, University of Virginia, Nov. 14, 2003

“Managing News Organizations,” Virginia Commonwealth University, Jan. 27-28, 1999

Freedom Forum Diversity Roundtable, Arlington, Va., Dec. 9, 1998

“Leading People into the Future,” University of Richmond Management Institute, 1997

#### COMMUNITY SERVICE

Speech at Centre County Chamber of Business and Industry breakfast meeting, Oct. 28, 2009, “The News About the News: How Will The Digital Revolution Change The News Media As We Know It?”

Moderator, Centre County district attorney candidates’ debate, sponsored by Centre County Chamber of Business and Industry, April 29, 2009

Course volunteer, triathlons (when not participating), 2005-present.

Volunteer, Richmond READ Center. One-on-one reading coaching for non-reading adults; also taught an orientation session for new volunteers. 2001-2002.

Pronouncer, Richmond Regional Spelling Bee (sponsored by the Times-Dispatch), 1994-2006 (with two exceptions).

President, Richmond Community High School PTSA, 1992-93. Conceived and led a project to paint the school’s distinctive entrance in vibrant Egyptian colors (the school’s nickname is the Pharaohs). Obtained neighborhood merchants’ donations for paint and a gold-leaf sign with the school’s name.

President (1986) and board member (1981-1991), Southampton Recreation Association, a nonprofit neighborhood facility with pools, tennis courts and an ice rink serving 500 families in Richmond. While president, organized and led a project to obtain a bank loan and build a facility for showers and changing and a new deck. Increased membership and improved finances.

#### MILITARY SERVICE

U.S. Army officer, Stuttgart, Germany, 1970-1973. Served as platoon leader, battalion staff officer and division-level public affairs officer. While public affairs officer, started the newspaper for the division-sized 7th Corps Support Command. Honorably discharged as a first lieutenant.