

MICHAEL A. WELLS

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SUMMARY

A highly observant and award-winning multimedia journalist. Developed strong reporting skills based on solid interviews and digging for critical details, whose approachability and compassion built rapport with sources, and who consistently created stories of depth and relevance for print, online and broadcast platforms. Strengths: interviewing, reporting, records research, writing, profiling, leadership, organization and planning skills, story management, still and video photography, audio editing, layout and design.

PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Reporting / Interviewing

Reporter, Editor

As a local editor for Patch.com, vetted social media and community sources for story ideas and vital news information to share with audience. Assigned, edited and published articles and events postings for a hyperlocal news hub in a major metropolitan area.

As a member of The Tampa Tribune's Continuous News Desk, covered breaking news, crime, courts, general assignment and enterprise reporting for 225,000 + circulation daily newspaper and its website, TBO.com. Appeared as guest commentator on CNN Headline News – Prime News and MSNBC – Verdict. Delved into documents and fiercely investigated for facts.

- Daily coordination of the coverage of breaking news events and important information.
- Watch dogged public agencies and researched individuals and organizations.
- Continuously learned from the mechanics of putting a story together, corraling resources and delving into how things work.
- Built strong rapport and gained trust from sources. Demonstrated human vulnerability to gain confidence of sources. Have accompanied people to the emergency room to get the story.
- Used good news management in vetting facts and creating stories.

Writing

Crafted stories for monthly magazines and daily newspapers on various beats, wrote for print and online. Planned stories by determining the issues and sources to be interviewed. Carefully crafted questions that aimed for the heart. Shot still and video photography to accompany written content.

- Wrote a narrative for a Tampa Tribune and TBO.com feature that focused on a police recruit's experience. Included videos and audio slideshows. Story won a Media General award for Best Feature Story, Metro Division 2007.
- Wrote a narrative for a Tampa Tribune and TBO.com feature on the county's oldest unsolved homicide. Included videos, photos of archived newspaper articles and audio slideshows. Story won a 2006 Society of Professional Journalists GreenEyeshade Award for Online Investigative Reporting.
- Planned and completed a two part narrative on a major arson investigation that required multiple interviews, researching reams of cryptic dairies, and focused writing. Won the SPJ Kansas City Press Club 2005 Silver Award for Best Feature.
- Covered a civil suit against Tampa General Hospital about a gross lack of adequate care tied to over a dozen infant deaths. Parents won millions in settlements and jury awards.
- Published in *Diverse* magazine a story about a lack of minority men in post-graduate programs.
- Published the feature "Murder in Missouri" in *The Advocate*, detailing a college student's stabbing death by a police officer.

Leadership

Proven leader in managing staff, leading projects and covering news.

- Supervised reporters, photographers and interns, ensuring completion of assignments.
- Guided journalists in reporting and writing.
- Developed a variety of sources to find story truth and increase context and depth.
- As a manager for Barnes & Noble and Hastings Entertainment (1994-98), supervised staffs of more than 50 employees, including other supervisors. Hired, trained and resolved conflicts.

Research, Planning and Organizational Skills

Enriched stories with extensive research. Acquired strong analytical skills through years of experience researching government records and online resources. Skilled at finding experts in the field who contributed to story facts. Strategic in approach to work and goals, demonstrated organizational skills.

- Organized and co-hosted Tampa Tribune's Media Summit in the spring of 2008. The event informed public agency spokespersons about the Continuous News Desk's duties and needs and improved relationships with agencies that had previously resisted speaking to the media.
- Requested and reviewed hundreds of pages of investigative documents to compile a story revealing sheriff's detectives' misuse of power while investigating a local strip club.
- Designed pages, took photographs, wrote and edited articles. Served as the face of a newspaper in a suburban community developing successful relationships with business owners and public officials. Received awards from local civic groups for community work.

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

2011 – Present	Self-employed freelance writer and web content provider
2010 – 2011	Local Editor, SeminoleHeights.Patch.com (AOL), Tampa, Fla.
2010 – 2011	Freelance Reporter for HealthNewsFlorida.org, Tampa, Fla.
2008 – 2010	Communications/Marketing Director, The Strategic Counsel, Tampa, Fla.
2005 – 2008	Reporter, The Tampa Tribune, St. Petersburg, Fla.
2005 – Present	Freelance Reporter for SiriusXM Radio, New York, NY.
2004 – 2005	Reporter, The Columbia Daily Tribune, Columbia, Mo.
2002 – 2004	Reporter, Southeast Missourian, Cape Girardeau, Mo.
2000 – 2002	Editor/Reporter, Community Publishers of Missouri, Springfield, Mo.
1999	Staff Writer, Fairs & Expos Magazine, Springfield, Mo.

PRODUCTION SKILLS

Computer	MS Office; Adobe Creative Suite; multiple blog platforms
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EDUCATION

1989 – 1994	English with emphasis in journalism, Southwest Missouri State University, Springfield, Mo.
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MEMBERSHIPS

National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association, Society of Professional Journalists, Investigative Reporters and Editors