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The Carolina Times

THE TRUTH UNBRIDED

VOLUME 98 - NUMBER 30

DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA - SATURDAY, AUGUST 3, 2019

TELEPHONE 919-682-2913

PRICE 50 CENTS

Media Responsibility and Accountability in the Era of

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In a world with an ultra-competitive, 24-hour news cycle, journalists are often urged by their editors and publishers to be first with the story.

Unfortunately, in doing so, some have traded accuracy for sensationalism.

Being first to break a story might provide accolades and even financial rewards, but whether printed, published online, or broadcast, a journalist's words can have serious repercussions for both the accuser and the accused.

A 2018 Pew Research survey found that about two-thirds of American adults (68 percent) say they at least occasionally get news on social media. About the same percentage share the news and information that they find on social channels.

While Pew notes that many of these consumers are skeptical about the information they see there, noting that a majority (57%) say they find information on social media to be inaccurate, the pervasiveness of social channels makes it more imperative than ever for the press to present facts and stray from innuendo.

In some cases, mainstream media has failed to adequately report or focus on stories that would benefit the public.

For example, FBI statistics indicate that more than 424,000 girls have gone missing since the beginning of 2018, yet many say the media hasn't done enough to shine a light on the crisis, which includes a large number of African Americans.

News reporting is a key witness in the court of public opinion

Take for example the case of Emmett Till, the black teen lynched and killed by white men after he was falsely accused of whistling at a white woman in Mississippi in 1955.

Author Michael Oby noted that the Black Press shed light on Emmett Till's brutal murder and continued to press the case for decades afterwards. Though Emmett's killers never spent a day in prison, in the APMreports series, "In the Dark: Acquitting Emmett Till's killers," Peter Vesco notes, "Pictures of Till's battered, unrecognizable face were printed in JET magazine and publications across the country. News of his hideous lynching led to outrage around the world."

Oby said news coverage by the Black Press proved to be crucial in the mobilization of African Americans at that time because it ignited the civil rights movement of the mid-1950s.



Dr. Elizabeth Primas is the ESSA Program Manager for the National Newspapers Publishers Association.

What We Can Learn from Schools that Educate Military Children

It is not uncommon for military programs to be adopted for use in civilian life. Schools in Virginia Beach, VA, that have some of the highest percentages of military children in the country, are doing an incredible job helping those students cope with the added stresses of having parents in the military. Other schools and communities can learn from Virginia Beach City Public Schools.

I recently spent a day with families and educators from Shelton Park Elementary School. About 70 percent of the students there were children with a parent in the military or a defense contractor. There is a large population of special forces personnel in Virginia Beach and at any moment, a parent can be called on for deployment to a warzone. Their families often do not know to where they are deployed, which compounds stress and anxiety.

A unique program in Virginia Beach public schools includes 28 Military Family Life Counselors, who work closely with schools' staff and families to support students. One mother we spoke with, talked about the fears her five-year-old daughter had while her father was deployed. After a particularly bad night, the mother let the school staff and the assigned counselor know that her daughter was going through a very difficult time. However, mom was able to send her daughter to school knowing that the school community would play an active role in engaging with her to help her work through her fears. The Virginia Beach counselors, funded under a program by the U.S. Department of Defense, are licensed and specialize in child and youth behavioral issues.

It's not just supporting students through the stress of having a parent deployed where Virginia Beach schools excel in supporting this population of students. A report from The Lexington Institute looks at how schools and districts with high percentages of military families are supporting students, who, on average, move every 2-3 years to far and distant places. Uprooting and moving so often is disruptive to a child's educational progress, and it can stall their academic achievement.

However, moving is not the only thing that can disrupt educational progress. Low teacher retention, frequent absenteeism, and unsafe school environments are all factors that can also inhibit academic progress.

The Every Student Succeeds Act, a federal education law, requires schools and districts to have a well-rounded curriculum. Too many schools have eliminated music, art, drama, and essential academic courses like social studies and science to give more instruction time to reading and math. Math and reading are critical, but these other subjects enrich the learning experience and help make a well-rounded, whole human being.

From the very beginning, students at Shelton Park Elementary School are exposed to art, music, leadership strategies. The well-rounded curriculum combined with support from the military counselors creates a school environment that can – and should – be modeled across the country.

As a lifetime educator, I am inspired to see how Virginia Beach Public Schools are supporting military children. They are truly a model to be emulated by any school, because every kid—military or not—deserves this kind of high-quality support and instruction.

Dr. Elizabeth Primas is the ESSA Program Manager for the National Newspapers Publishers Association.

Trump aide: Trump criticism of US different from 4 Democrats

By DARLENE SUPER-
VILLE
Associated Press

BERKELEY HEIGHTS, N.J. (AP) — A top adviser to President Donald Trump is claiming a "huge difference" between Trump's criticism of America during the 2016 campaign and current criticism of the U.S. by four liberal Democratic congresswomen of color who Trump has been feuding with.

White House adviser Stephen Miller tells "Fox News Sunday" that Trump's past words were part of his campaign of putting America first.

Miller says comments by first-term congresswomen Ilhan Omar of Minnesota, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York, Ayanna Pressley of Massachusetts and Rashida Tlaib of Michigan are part of an "ideology that runs down America."

The lawmakers say they're fighting to help make America better.

Trump carried the feud into a second week Sunday, tweeting "I don't believe the four Congresswomen are capable of loving our Country."

Appeals court halts Texas death row in- mate's execution

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — A state appeals court has halted this week's scheduled execution of a Texas death row inmate condemned for the slaying of an 81-year-old woman nearly 30 years ago.

The Texas Court of Criminal Appeals granted a request by Mark Robertson's attorneys to stay his execution.

The stay came as Robertson's attorneys asked the court to review a 1997 decision in which it had denied a previous appeal over claims that Robertson's trial attorney had worked to keep African Americans off the jury.

Robertson had been set for lethal injection for the August 1989 fatal shooting of Edna Brau at her Dallas home.

Robertson received a life sentence for fatally shooting Sean Hill, Brau's 19-year-old grandson, and another life term for killing a convenience store clerk 10 days earlier.