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Minority workshop seeks to provide guidance, scholarships for future journalists

Workshop participants each year can find career advice, job opportunities and even scholarships to the university. This summer's workshop will be held July 6-17.

The Minority Journalism Workshop considers recruits' writing, reporting and graphic communication skills with the help of 35 hand-selected journalists from all over the nation to recruit its 30 high school students each year.

Those who participate in the workshop enjoy the luxury of being a part of a nationwide network of former Minority Journalism Workshop students and professionals. This allows students to seek guidance for their careers and to find opportunities for jobs and college scholarships. The workshop also allows the students to produce news stories, editorials, photos, columns and feature stories about the campus and workshop.

"The workshop is one of the most important activities of the university's journalism department in its 75 year history," Creg Stephenson, the former supervisor of the workshop, said.

The workshop is held each summer at the University of Alabama in the College of Communication and Information Sciences. According to Kathryn Adams, director of the program, this summer's workshop, which is held on July 6-17, focuses on "the challenges facing today's journalism professionals," "fact vs. opinion" and "issues in news writing and reporting for newspapers."

The workshop presents over \$50,000 in scholarships. A renewable scholarship is given to the best students in the program. The ones who choose to come to the university receive membership to the Capstone Association of Black Journalists, a chapter of NABJ.

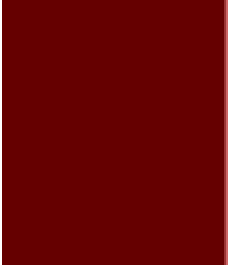
"[NABJ] alums have made their mark in their profession all over the nation," Stephenson said.

Students are also sent to professional meetings and ASNE job fairs, which provide training in job searching. For students to experience this hands-on journalism workshop, all applicants must complete an application form, submit high school transcripts and standardized test scores and write a 250-word original essay on their interest in journalism.

The workshop is made possible by the funding from donors such as The Knight Foundation, The Tuscaloosa News, The Mobile Register and The Gannett Corporation. Local newspapers are also allowed to sponsor students for the workshop by paying for expenses. This allows full coverage of the student's tuition, supplies, field trips, meals and housing.

Since 1984, the percentage of successful minority graduates has increased from seven to 36 percent because of the minority program that has been established.

"After 20 years of excellence, the workshop has earned a reputation of



bringing quality talent to the field of journalism," Adams said.

"Its success shows what we can accomplish by forming partnerships with our friends in industry and foundations," Stephenson said.

This story was written by Blair Davis, davis246@bama.ua.edu, and was edited by Lauren Davidson, Lauren.m.Davidson@ua.edu.

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