

I came into my Advanced Journalism class my sophomore year with the expectation that I was going to write big, in-depth news pieces. In my mind, that was the only thing journalism could be. However, my broadcast requirement greatly changed my preconceived notion of what “journalism” meant. Ever since that first broadcast nearly two years ago, I’ve learned that sometimes the best way to get content and information across is through a broadcast.

Last spring, I watched as so many of my favorite restaurants closed down because they no longer had the same volume of customers that were needed to support their stores. Storefronts went black and my community lost restaurants that had been open for twenty years. When we returned to in-person school in the fall, I made it my goal to cover new restaurants that were opening. If the press I was giving these businesses could help just a little bit, then putting in the extra effort to do a broadcast was worth it. Through this, I learned the importance of building a community through journalism. Being a part of a local paper gave me the power to support the people who make Westport the community it is. Telling people's stories through video makes their stories much more compelling. I’ve seen the restaurants I’ve covered grow into companies that are flourishing, and while I can’t contribute all of their success to myself, I like to think that creating videos that they can advertise on their website and share on their social media accounts has helped.

Additionally, having the opportunity to teach my peers how to use professional video cameras and editing software has given me the opportunity to learn about what being a leader means. My class periods were spent in the back of the Inklings room, showing new members of the class how our cameras worked and the easiest way to upload footage to their laptops. These experiences taught me the most important part of being a leader is to be patient. Editing software can be tricky and if you’ve never used it before, it takes time to grasp; however, just being willing to sit with someone and talk them through each step if normally enough. As I begin to train new leadership, the best thing I can do is let them learn how to do it themselves, but be there to work with them.

Doing broadcasts has taught me more lessons than I could ever fit on one page, but what I can leave you with is that if I’ve learned anything from these experiences, broadcasting is the best way to communicate a story to someone. To hear someone’s experiences in their own words feels more impactful than just reading it in a feature or seeing it in a pulled quote. Broadcast journalism has made me the person I am because it showed me who my community truly was.

Judges, thank you for your consideration.

[Kneads baker stirs up a unique experience](#)

This was the first in-person reporting I had done in months because from March on, we were required to do interviews online. Knead had opened right before I filmed, so the goal was to bring in traction for them. I focused on showcasing their unique qualities, like their personal flour mill and chalkboard menus.

[Opinions on the confirmation of Amy Coney Barrett to the Supreme Court](#)

I tend to stay away from podcasts; however, I enjoyed learning to commentate for this. It was a new experience to learn how to use Anchor, but it ended up being very beneficial, as I could teach new members of Inklings how to use the platform.

[Westport Museum for History and Culture hosts holiday spectacle](#)

For this broadcast, I really focused on showcasing the different vendors, so if people saw something they were interested in and hadn't attended the event, they'd still be able to have the chance to buy it. Our town museum is in the process of rebranding and this was their first big event under their new name, so I wanted to capture the different things they were doing to attract new visitors. Additionally, it had just snowed when it was filmed, which made it more challenging to get b-roll because we had to stay on the pavement, but I believe it made me a more efficient reporter.

[Capuli brings Westcoast Cuisine to Westport](#)

Capuli was a restaurant that was new to downtown and was in the process of their soft opening when we filmed it. The owners were some of the nicest people I've worked with and they had a great story to tell about why they decided to open their restaurant.

[Hook'd on the Sound Opens at Compo Beach](#)

Hook'd had replaced our local beach restaurant that had been there for decades, so most of our town was upset upon hearing the change. I wanted to cover Hook'd because the town had such a negative preconceived notion of the restaurant and I wanted to help change their opinions.