

Journalists speak to URI students at annual Journalism Day

By Allie Herrera

KINGSTON - “Don’t show the pictures of the keg stands,” said Dan McGowan, WPRI digital reporter. His advice to University of Rhode Island students at Journalism Day last Thursday was to clean up their social media accounts and use social platforms as a tool, rather than a hindrance.

Journalism Day kicked off at 9:15 a.m. with workshops on how reporters should use social media responsibly and how to break into the magazine industry. Each workshop was an hour long and held two sessions, the second of which started at 10:30 a.m. Both workshops took place on the third floor of the Memorial Union.

The panelists leading the discussion with students and the public on social media were Pamela Cotter, assistant managing editor of breaking news at *The Providence Journal* and reporter Dan McGowan. During the workshop, Cotter and McGowan shared their personal experiences with social media and offered advice on how to use it effectively. From sharing articles via Twitter and making corrections on a tweet, they encouraged students to use social media as a tool to help build their personal brand.

Cotter stressed the importance of expanding on skills such as writing and reading. Her experience with social media is to treat it like a publishing platform, which means applying the same rules to a tweet as a journalist would to an article. The ever-evolving world of media in journalism has sparked the interest of reporters as well as students.

URI senior and *Good Five Cent Cigar* editor-in-chief, Allison Farrelly said that although she may not be interested in pursuing the same job positions as the journalists she met, she walked away with a little more than just advice.

“I was reminded that really no one has an idea {of} what the future of journalism will be,” said Farrelly. “And for me, that's exciting.”

In the magazine-related workshop, Julie Tremaine, creative director of Providence Media and Jamie Coelho, associate editor of *Rhode Island Monthly* magazine spoke about the importance of using all forms of journalism to break into the industry.

Coelho says that being a well-rounded journalist can lead to multiple job positions for a student coming out of college. She has witnessed first-hand the importance of knowing how to shoot, edit, and write articles. At *Rhode Island Monthly*, Coelho has used her skills of producing multimedia work to appeal to multiple audiences. She says students should take the opportunity to learn how to produce multimedia content.

According to University of Rhode Island Journalism Department Chair John Pantalone, Journalism Day has been an annual event since the 1980s and has been an opportunity for students to meet successful journalists with substantial experience in media.

“[Students] obtain important information from [journalists] about how the profession should be practiced, how it is changing and how to adapt skills to the changing aspects of reporting,” Pantalone said.

After the workshops, students and the public were welcome to participate in a video journalism seminar at 1 p.m. in the Multicultural Center. Panelists represented publications like the *Boston Herald*, *The New London Day*, and the *Portland Press Herald*. Multimedia pieces were shown and discussed by reporters, photographers, students, and faculty.

This annual event will continue to be co-sponsored by the Journalism Department and the Rhode Island Press Association in years to come, says Pantalone.