

Awards Gala Headliner Floyd Abrams Defends WikiLeaks' Rights



PHOTOS BY JOHN SMOCK AND DANIEL BACHHUBER

First Amendment lawyer Floyd Abrams (center) received a Lifetime Achievement Award for his defense of press freedoms over more than 40 years. Four 2010 graduates were also honored (clockwise from top left): Sherry Mazzocchi, Christine Prentice, Shane Dixon Kavanaugh, and Simone Sebastian.

One of the nation's leading champions of press freedoms does not consider WikiLeaks' classified-document dumps to be journalism. But First Amendment lawyer Floyd Abrams insisted that any efforts to limit WikiLeaks' free speech rights would imperil the ability of journalists to do their job.

Abrams, who famously defended *The New York Times*' right to publish the Pentagon Papers 40 years ago, made his remarks after accepting a Lifetime Achievement Award at the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism's annual fundraising dinner on May 16. Before an audience at The TimesCenter in New York that included veterans from major news organizations, including many he has represented, the longtime lawyer for Cahill Gordon & Reindel said WikiLeaks' release of tens of thousands of pages of classified documents on the Iraq war and U.S. foreign policy had threatened national security – but still must be protected.

He contrasted WikiLeaks' actions with *The Times*' handling of the Pentagon Papers, a top-secret military account of the Vietnam War. He told the story of a federal judge who asked *The Times* to think carefully before printing portions of the documents. The newspaper meticulously reviewed the dossier and ultimately determined that only some of the material was safe to publish.

"That's what I think is the system working," he said. Meanwhile, he contended, WikiLeaks' decision to publish unedited diplomatic and intelligence files undermined U.S. foreign policy

and put informants' lives at risk. He cited an interview in which WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange acknowledged that his group only inspects a fraction of the documents it posts on its website. "To my mind," Abrams said, "WikiLeaks has often behaved in a reckless way."

Abrams has defended a wide range of clients, from *New York Times* reporter Judith Miller, who went to jail in 2005 for refusing to reveal her sources in a CIA leak case, to the Brooklyn Museum, to the credit ratings agency Standard & Poor's. In 2009, during the Citizens United Supreme Court case, he argued that even corporations are entitled to unrestrained speech.

Abrams contrasted WikiLeaks' actions in publishing classified documents with *The New York Times*' handling of the Pentagon Papers, a top-secret military account of the Vietnam War.

Business Journalism and Sherry Mazzocchi was presented with the School's first Sidney Hillman Foundation Award for Social Justice Reporting.

After the speech, Abrams said that if Assange is tried for publishing classified materials, he deserves a top-notch lawyer – just not Abrams. "He needs a lawyer who believes in him as well as his rights," Abrams said. "I don't believe in him, just his right to free speech." ■

The awards ceremony doubled as a scholarship fundraiser for the Journalism School, which celebrates its fifth anniversary this year. Four graduates from the Class of 2010 were also honored: Simone Sebastian and Shane Dixon Kavanaugh each received a Dean's Award for Excellence in Journalism, while Christine Prentice won the Frederic Wiegold Award for

Interning Around the Globe—and Around the Block

The Class of 2011 has hit the ground running (and blogging) at summer internships that are more far-flung, and more varied, than ever.

Seventeen of the 87 students are interning abroad in 12 countries – including Canada, Chile, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Liberia, and Singapore. Among the internship partners overseas: Aboriginal Peoples Television Network in Winnipeg, *The New York Times* in New Delhi, and Fox News in Jerusalem.

“From the start, it has been very hands-on – they threw me into reporting,” said Carmel Delshad, who is working in Cairo for NPR. “And it has been a great exercise of my Arabic skills.”

Students are experimenting with made-to-order internships — apprenticing with reporters or splitting their workweeks between two outlets.

Students also fanned out across the U.S. – to *The Times-Picayune* in New Orleans, for example, and to CBS in San Francisco. They’re working around the block, too, for such New York City outlets as *Vanity Fair*, *The New York Times*, the *New York Daily News*, *Scientific American*, PBS’s “Need to Know,” Al-Jazeera English, NY1 News, *Barron’s*, *Crain’s New York Business*, and Bloomberg News.

As in the past, some students won their internships through official competitions. Selly Thiam is a Carnegie Summer Fellow at ABC News’ investigative unit, Matt Draper landed a Dow Jones News Fund internship on *The New York Post’s* sports desk, and Tamy Cozier was selected for an Eddie Pinder “Nightline” Fellowship at ABC. Cozier said “Nightline” wasted no time putting her to work. For a June piece about “extreme” proms, she said, “I went out with a producer and even got to shoot a little bit of b-roll.”



KIRSTI ITAMERI

Carmel Delshad photographs street art from the Egyptian revolution that ousted President Hosni Mubarak earlier this year. She is interning for NPR in Cairo this summer.

For the first time, students are experimenting with made-to-order internships – apprenticing with reporters and photographers or splitting their workweeks between two outlets. Dara Sharif divides her time between the New York bureau of TheRoot.com – a *Washington Post* site that covers African-American news, culture, and opinion – and Voices That Must Be Heard, an online publication recently acquired by the CUNY J-School that highlights stories from New York City’s ethnic and community press.

For her three days a week at The Root, Sharif said, “I’m writing and also sitting in on meetings where the editorial management analyzes real-time page views and unique visits to the site. I’m at Voices the other two days, curating and editing articles. Together, the two give me a full picture of the needs at both levels of journalism—national and local.” ■

J-School Acquires Community and Ethnic News Site

The CUNY Graduate School of Journalism has taken two major steps toward the development of a Center for Community and Ethnic Media. First, the School is acquiring *Voices That Must Be Heard*, a weekly online publication that aggregates work from New York City’s ethnic and community press. The School also will take over responsibility for administering the Ippies awards, which honor journalistic excellence in that media sector.

The New York Community Media Alliance created the two initiatives in the months following 9/11 and housed them for nearly a decade. They will now be a core part of the Journalism School’s planned Center, which will also include research and training.

“One of the great things about New York City’s media

sector is the rich variety of small publications that cover immigrant communities and neighborhoods,” said Sarah Bartlett, director of the Journalism School’s Urban Reporting Program. “*Voices* is the only news site that translates that work into English, making it available to

VOICES THAT MUST BE HEARD

a larger audience. We see tremendous opportunities to extend its reach and increase its visibility.”

The integration of *Voices* into the CUNY J-School’s masters degree program allows its multilingual student body to assist with translations and produce original stories for the site. “This is a win-win situation for everyone

and we are excited to find such an appropriate new home for *Voices* and the Ippies,” said Juana Ponce de León, executive director of the New York Community Media Alliance, who is helping oversee the transition.

Voices fits neatly with a digital training initiative launched at the end of last year to help members of the city’s ethnic and community press strengthen their publications’ online news presence. With the aid of a Ford Foundation grant, the initiative has already trained more than 120 community and ethnic journalists in the use of multimedia tools, which will increase the role of video, audio, and social media on the *Voices* website, said Garry Pierre-Pierre, director of the project. The School plans to launch a redesigned site in the fall. ■

Board Members Make Gifts to Support Scholarships

Two members of the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism’s Board of Advisers have made generous financial gifts to provide scholarships for deserving students.

Roz Abrams, a longtime television news anchor in New York City, has agreed to underwrite a full-tuition scholarship for one student each year for the next 10 years. Recipients will be called Roz Abrams Scholars and will be chosen with the aim of bringing diversity to the journalism profession.

The other donation, from Journal Register Company CEO John Paton, will help support two students in the J-School’s new entrepreneurial journalism program in each of the next five years. Paton has established the “J. Douglas Creighton Scholarship Fund” in memory of his mentor, a founder of the SunMedia Corporation, who died in January 2004. Paton started as a copy boy and eventually rose to publisher at the Sun chain.

Abrams, one of the CUNY J-School’s original advisory board members, has funded a full scholarship every year since the School opened in 2006. Her first gift was awarded in the name of Bill Beutel, her late friend and colleague at WABC-TV’s “Eyewitness News” program.



Roz Abrams



John Paton

Abrams scholars have included Jego Armstrong from the pioneering Class of 2007, who works for Bloomberg News; Carl Winfield from the Class of 2008, now a senior reporter for *Institutional Investor’s Money Management* letter; and current student Selly Thiam, who will graduate from the School’s Master of Arts in Journalism degree program in December 2011.

Paton’s gift is earmarked for students in the entrepreneurial journalism track. The program currently includes a one-semester course of study culminating in an Advanced Certificate in Entrepreneurial Journalism for students and mid-career journalists interested in creating journalistic businesses, working in startups, or bringing innovation to existing media companies. The School is also in the process of seeking necessary approvals to start offering the nation’s first Master of Arts in Entrepreneurial Journalism by the 2012-13 academic year.

Paton joined the School’s advisory board in early 2010, shortly after he became Journal Register chief executive. The company owns more than 300 print and online news and information products serving 19 million Americans a month. ■

SCHOOLNOTES

ALUMNI NEWS

CLASS OF 2010: **Alex Abad-Santos** was accepted into the year-long fellowship program at *The Atlantic*. **Carla Candia** is a multimedia reporter at *El Diario*. **Melissa Cooper** is a news assistant at WPIX-CW11. **Megan Finnegan** is a reporter for Manhattan Media. **Spencer Freeman** is an editor at e-book publisher Breathless Press and a book reviewer for *RT Book Reviews* magazine. **Carl Gaines** is a reporter for American Lawyer Media. **Emily Johnson** is a reporter for *The Jakarta Globe* in Indonesia. **Shane Kavanaugh** is a politics reporter for *Crain's New York Business*. **Musikilu Mojeed** is enterprise editor at 234Next.com in Nigeria. **Christine Prentice** is working as a reporter for the FINS career site of *The Wall Street Journal*. **Dana Rapoport** is a news assistant at FOX News' "Geraldo at Large." **Matt Robinson** was hired as a reporter for Bloomberg News. **Perry Santanachote** is online editor at *Gotham Magazine*. **Simone Sebastian** covers energy for the *Houston Chronicle*. **Daniel Tucker** is a full-time reporter in the newsroom at WNYC. **Thomas Vineeth** is web editor at FIOS1 News/Westchester. **Amy Yensi** is a reporter at News 12.

CLASS OF 2009: **Caroline Linton** is homepage editor at The Daily Beast. **John DePetro** is video producer at *Sports Illustrated*. **Lois DeSocio** is an embedded journal-

ist at Antenna Software. **Anastasia Economides** is a news assistant at *The New York Times*. **Emily Feldman** is home page editor of FEAST at NBC-LIM. **James Flood** is editorial content analyst at Bloomberg. **Valerie Lapinski** is assistant producer at Time.com. **Xiomara Martinez-White** is a copy editor at *The Week*. **Marcella Venezia** is associate web editor at *Nation's Restaurant News*.

CLASS OF 2008: **Eliot Caroom** is a business reporter at *The Star-Ledger*. **Erin O'Neill** is the PolitiFact New Jersey reporter at *The Star-Ledger*. **CLASS OF 2007:** **Dan Rivoli** is a reporter at Portfolio Media's Law 360.

AWARDS

AnnMarie Costella (2008) received honorable mention in the 2010 NY Press Assn. Excellence Awards' in-depth reporting category for coverage of Queens and the Haiti quake crisis for the *Queens Chronicle*. The Council on Contemporary Families gave media awards to **Tim Harper's 2010 Craft 2 class** for a website on homeless school children in NYC, and **Jacqueline Linge** (2009) for her photo and video essay on same-sex bi-national couples. **Hannah Rappleye** (2010) won a \$2,000 Overseas Press Club Foundation Scholarship. **Mike Reicher** (2009), a reporter for the *Daily Pilot* in Costa



JOHN SMOCK

CUNY J-School advisory board member Dean Baquet (center) has been promoted to managing editor at *The New York Times*, effective Sept. 6. Here he chats with *Times* publisher Arthur Sulzberger (left) and Garry Pierre-Pierre, head of the School's community and ethnic media initiative.

Mesa, CA., snagged first and second place in an investigative reporting category for the California Newspaper Publishers Assn.'s 2010 Better Newspapers Contest. In the SPJ Region 1 Mark of Excellence Awards, 2010 grads **Christopher Schuetze** and **Samantha Stark** received first place in Online Sports Reporting and **Andrea Swalec** won top prize in Online News Reporting. UNITY: Journalists of Color gave **Amy Stretten** (2011) a Global Reporting Fellowship to cover the UN High Level Meeting on AIDS in New York from June 6-11. **Teresa Tomassoni** (2010) has won the second Stone & Holt Weeks Fellowship. Created by NPR and *The Washington Post* to help launch a young journalist's career, the fellowship lets her work first at the newspaper, then at the public radio network, over more than half a year starting in September.

J-School Strengthens its French Connection

The journalism students hit city streets, smart phones in hand, and interviewed bedraggled commuters. Then they scrambled back to the studio to edit the video footage and assemble a web story – on deadline.

The scene could have been right out of CUNY J-School. But this real-life exercise in journalism took place in Paris, where NYC News Service Director Jere Hester recently spent a week as a guest instructor at the Graduate School of Journalism and Communications (CELSA) of the Sorbonne University.

Hester's May visit was part of an ongoing exchange of faculty and students between the two journalism pro-



Sorbonne journalism students Thomas Paulmeyer (left) and Jean-Baptiste Gauvin interview a commuter at a Paris rail station.

grams. During a very busy week, Hester worked closely with students on devising detailed reporting plans for their May trip to Estonia and developing ideas for their own news-driven websites.

Hester told students and faculty about The Local, the Fort Greene (Brooklyn) hyperlocal site the J-School runs with *The New York Times*. For some more home-grown inspiration, he brought in as guests the young team behind Essonne Info, an innovative, year-old website that covers a Paris suburb.

Then he put the students to work: The reporters conceived a crowdsourcing project built around transportation issues. They fanned out to rail stations to do accompanying video interviews. The end product proved strong enough to be published by Essonne Info.

The two journalism programs are a good fit. CELSA offers more journalism theory, while the CUNY J-School is a leader in multimedia storytelling and journalistic innovation. ■

JERE HESTER

INSIDESTORY

CUNY Graduate School of Journalism
219 W. 40th St., Third Floor
New York, NY 10018



BRESLIN GIVES HIS RULES OF GOOD JOURNALISM



DANIEL BACHHUBER

In a special appearance at the CUNY J-School on Apr. 12, Pulitzer-Prize winning writer **Jimmy Breslin** reminisced about his long career. The 80-year-old Breslin, whose decades as a tabloid columnist made him one of New York City's best-known voices, attributed his journalistic success to a few basic rules. Among them: "Go to the loser ahead of the winner... Shut up and listen... Sit down at the typewriter and write for hours." Breslin also spoke about his latest book, a biography of Brooklyn Dodgers general manager Branch Rickey, who integrated major league baseball by hiring the first African-American player, Jackie Robinson. Tom Robbins, the J-School's new Investigative Journalist in Residence, moderated the discussion.