

Kate Masters

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Reporter

Creative storyteller, empowering readers to better understand the world around them.

Award-winning investigative and enterprise reporter writing compelling stories for diverse media platforms. Research, produce and write on topics including health, education, politics, culture and breaking news, leveraging in-depth knowledge of local areas and residents to reach and engage audiences. Draw on interviewing, listening, creative writing and journalism expertise to share real-world knowledge and untold stories. Critical thinker, investigating and analyzing complex problems and translating them into simple, concise language.

I believe in searching tirelessly for unheard stories and bringing them to light while maintaining a steadfast devotion to the truth.

Core competencies include:

Print & Website Content | Journalistic Writing | Editing & Proofreading | Research | Investigative Reporting | Editorial Judgment
Current Events | Search Engine Optimization (SEO) | Search Trends | Content Writing | Fact Checking | Podcasts
Video Production & Editing | AP Style | Strategic Planning | Cross-department Collaboration | Relationship Building

Recent Professional Experience

VIRGINIA MERCURY, Richmond, VA

Feb. 2020 - Aug. 2022

Independent nonprofit news site covering Virginia politics and policy, with more than 20,000 daily newsletter subscribers and reach to thousands of readers statewide

Health and Education Reporter

Covered health and education policy on topics ranging from the Youngkin administration's school culture wars to monopolization among Virginia hospitals. Balanced enterprise reporting with demands of daily newsletter, juggling breaking news and daily stories with longer-term investigative pieces. Filed record requests and dug deep on stories, from expansive sourcing (talking to 12+ people for longform investigative stories) to researching and understanding complex policy issues. Handled SEO optimization.

- Broke news on federal report citing systemic failures in state's response to special education complaints.
- Led Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)-driven coverage of Virginia's COVID-19 response, with scoops that included the state's early reliance on an unusable vaccine scheduling system and failure to require hospitals to test patients for COVID-19 before releasing them to nursing homes.
- Recognized as Outstanding Young Journalist by the Virginia Press Association (2022).
- Wrote [story](#) on Virginia's largest hospital system threatening to cut off thousands of state Medicaid patients from its facilities. Filed records requests with three different agencies and performed weeks of research to understand hospital monopolization, how hospitals negotiate with insurance companies, and how those negotiations affect health care pricing.

BETHESDA BEAT, Bethesda, MD

Sept. 2019 - Jan. 2020

Local online publication with daily newsletter covering Montgomery County, Maryland's largest and most diverse locality, with approximately 1 million page views per month and 300,000 paying annual subscribers

Government Reporter

Reported on local and state politics in Montgomery County; reported and photographed two to three stories each day for online news publication. Developed relationships with a wide variety of state and local officials. Completed multiple in-depth daily stories as well as longer-term projects requiring expansive sourcing and research. Managed SEO optimization in WordPress.

- Broke news on Montgomery County's inability to enforce more than 1,000 short-term rental violations under a largely unfunded local ordinance; story selected as a finalist for the 2020 LION Awards.
- Provided ongoing coverage of several stories with statewide and local importance, including:
 - Montgomery County's fight to add its 12th early voting site despite objections by Republican-majority local elections board;

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- Delays in development of the Purple Line, a planned light rail track linking four major D.C. suburbs in Maryland;
- Governor Larry Hogan's planned lane expansion/toll lane project for Interstate 270 and Interstate 495 as part of a public-private partnership.

THE FREDERICK NEWS-POST (FNP), Frederick, MD

Aug. 2016 - Sept. 2019

Long-time daily print newspaper, with circulation of 30,000

Features Reporter, Aug 2018 - Sep 2019

Covered news and culture in Frederick County, with emphasis on local policy. Collaborated on multimedia content on topics that included local news stories, arts/cultural events and restaurant reviews.

- Appeared as host on several podcasts and provided voiceover/helped produce videos related to [stories and food reviews](#); developed shot lists and coordinated with staff videographer. Videos won first-place awards from the Maryland-Delaware-D.C. (MDDC) Press Association Awards two consecutive years.
- Analyzed long-term effects of zoning laws, including a story on density restrictions in downtown Frederick that won first place at MDDC Press Association Awards.
- Won first place in feature writing from MDDC Awards for a story about [upcoming streetwear designers](#) in Frederick.
- Broke news about the [sudden downsizing](#) of a local arts nonprofit, which unexpectedly fired half its staff and canceled plans to convert a large building in downtown Frederick into a community studio space.
- Wrote feature pieces on Frederick's [strict noise ordinances](#) and how they interfered with the local music scene, including efforts to establish new concert venues.
- Served as regular contributor to Uncapped, a monthly *FNP* magazine covering Maryland's craft beer scene.
- Charged with rebranding and writing *FNP*'s food review section (rebranded to "Tastebuds") by adding in multimedia elements (including videos mentioned above) and serious criticism to reflect the caliber of Frederick's food scene, which includes nationally reviewed restaurants and several establishments owned by celebrity chef Bryan Voltaggio.
 - Contributed to *FNP* receiving journalism awards for "Tastebuds," including first place at MDDC Awards in 2018 and 2019 for videos personally produced with staff photographer.
- Developed, produced and hosted series of Facebook Live interviews with local elected officials (Beyond the Ballot), the first time *FNP* expanded its election coverage beyond print.

Health/Fort Detrick Reporter, Aug 2016 - Aug 2018

Reported on Fort Detrick, one of the largest Army research installations on the East Coast, and Frederick's local health-care system.

- Authored award-winning health pieces, including special edition on opioid addiction and breaking news on swine flu outbreak at the Great Frederick Fair.
- Cultivated sources at federal health agencies, including the National Cancer Institute, USAMRIID, and the National Biodefense Analysis and Countermeasures Center.
- Accepted into National Cancer Reporting Fellowship program by the Association of Health Care Journalists; visited the National Institutes of Health campus to learn about topics such as analyzing study results, immunotherapy, clinical trials and the history of cancer research.

THE TRACE, Boston, MA

June 2015 - Aug. 2016

National nonprofit news site dedicated to covering gun violence

Public Health Reporter

Covered gun violence through a public health lens; reported on Congressional ban on gun research, firearm fatalities, and new studies from major public health institutions.

- Gained exclusive access to new research, including landmark study on gun ownership by Harvard researchers; study results were shared between *The Trace* and *The Guardian* for a series of stories.

Education

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-COLUMBIA, Columbia, MO

Bachelor of Journalism; Emphasis in Magazine Writing

Technical Skills

WordPress | Microsoft Excel | Adobe (Photoshop & InDesign) | Final Cut Pro | Audition | Audacity | Premiere