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Student Lands First AP Internship at USF St. Petersburg
By: Alyson Seligman
August 30, 2004 5:49PM EST

Journalism student Kristie Martinez completed her summer internship at the prestigious Associated Press' in their Los Angeles bureau and made history – she became the first student from the Department of Journalism and Media Studies to intern with a national wire service.

Martinez’s stories about celebrities, the US opening of a controversial human anatomy exhibit and Cirque du Soleil were published with her byline in the Los Angeles Times, San Francisco Examiner and other prominent newspapers.

“They let me work on stories that were of national interest and statewide importance. They put that trust and faith in you, even though you’re just an intern,” Martinez said. “You’re representing this global news organization. You get on the phone, and you’re like, ‘This is Kristie Martinez from The Associated Press,’ and you’re talking to them.”

When Martinez first arrived at the Los Angeles Bureau, one of the largest AP offices in the country, she started by writing celebrity briefs.

She began one of her first stories about a rock star, “Courtney Love got a bench warrant for her 40th birthday when she failed to appear in court for arraignment on an assault charge Friday.”

As Martinez assumed more responsibility, she was assigned to cover the beginning of Ronald Reagan’s memorial and other events.

Earlier this year when Martinez first came across the AP internship notice, she dismissed it. “I thought, ‘It’s too big. I’m probably not going to get it.’” But with encouragement, she applied and beat out the national competition.

Mark Walters, internship program coordinator said, “Our students have the talent and skills to compete nationally. What Kristie did goes to prove that. We’re a small program with an ambitious mission.”


By Rita Florez