

Paige Mara Feigenbaum

Hi. I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce myself, Paige Mara Feigenbaum, and share my news reporting [demo reel and portfolio](#) with you. My earliest memory of wanting to embark on a career in journalism dates back to when I was in Kindergarten. As a five-year-old living in suburban Long Island, my elementary school made headlines when neighborhood teenagers set off a pipe bomb in the building. My dad took me to campus, where I saw a local reporter from WABC Eyewitness News covering the story. I remember being fascinated by him and the news van. I have been hooked ever since.

I most recently wrote about travel and hospitality for [Smart Meetings](#), a magazine and website read by meeting planners and hoteliers. After wild fires burned through Wine Country in October 2017, I wrote an article that businesses re-opened and tourists should not be deterred from visiting. Since then, when I introduce myself as a journalist, some people have thanked me for my service. That honorable acknowledgement is typically reserved for law enforcement officers, firefighters, and members of the military. This comment made me realize just how valuable reporters are to the communities we serve by sharing important information and messaging. It has reignited my fire within to use my voice to bring essential news to the people it impacts.

Breaking news runs through my veins. I get such an adrenaline rush when credited with discovering a story first or landing an exclusive. I am sure you too strive to achieve that. I am familiar with the importance of deadlines, racing against the clock, and making sure all information is accurate and factual. I am naturally a very inquisitive person and like to dig deep into stories and come up with interesting angles. At the beginning of December 2016, I participated in APTRA Academy, an annual weekend long intensive news reporting bootcamp in Malibu, Calif., hosted by FOX11's Hal Eisner. He enlists mentors who work in news and law enforcement to stage a major news event. The teams of students are tasked with covering the event and making a news package.

I happened to be at a doctor's appointment at UCLA Medical Center when a shooting happened on campus. Many would view this as being in the wrong place at the wrong time. I viewed it as the opposite -- being in the wrong place at the *right* time. After my appointment was over, the journalist in me kicked in and I went outside to explore what was going on. I joined all the local and network news crews and was front and center at the press conferences with law enforcement and university officials. I recorded video on my cell phone and posted updates on my Facebook page.

When I interned at Suffolk Life newspaper on Long Island, I was assigned stories ranging from a summer festival to a firehouse marching band to a fundraiser for an ill child to the closing of a business to road construction to dredging and more. I hope you see my wide spectrum of writing ability and topics reflected in my [work samples](#). I dedicated myself to local, hard, and feature news stories. I'm prepared to do that again at your station.

The word "entertainment" in Entertainment Tonight can understandably be quite misleading. While there, I did so much more than celebrity fluff stories. I often confirmed news with public information officers at police, sheriffs, and fire stations, FBI agents, lawyers, and the coroner's office. I'd submit requests to obtain 911 calls. I was on the news desk and the web writer when news broke that Osama Bin Laden had been killed, when Steve Jobs died, when Amanda Knox landed in Seattle after being released from Italian prison, when a gunman opened fire inside an Aurora, CO movie theater, when Bill Clinton brought Laura Ling and Euna Lee home from imprisonment in North Korea, and when the Sandy Hook massacre occurred. I also covered the murder of a local publicist, random shots being fired at an intersection in Hollywood, and a series of arson fires set by a transient. At TMZ, I sifted through and requested police reports, lawsuits, and court documents with extreme detail and diligence.

As a journalist, I understand the importance of being flexible with the type of content you deliver and provide to viewers. You need to tailor to your specific audience. In Los Angeles, people crave entertainment news. Whether you tune in to an entertainment magazine show or watch the local news stations, a large percentage of the stories are entertainment based. I know the demographics are very different in most other parts of the country and residents are more interested in super local content. When we watch TV, we all want to see stories we can relate to. Hollywood is a large part of daily life in LA. I'm sure your viewers relate more to community events, local government, education, charity, crime, fires, and car accidents. I'm ready to acclimate myself to that mindset and give the people what they want.

Many of the entertainment and network journalists I admire all got their start in local news -- Nancy O'Dell in Myrtle Beach, Mark Steines in Waterloo, IA, Lara Spencer in Chattanooga, TN, Christina McLarty in Little Rock, Robin Roberts in Hattiesburg, MS, and Mary Hart in Omaha. The list goes on and on. I appreciate the value a background in local news has in building a strong foundation for a reporter to go on to be successful on a larger stage.

I owe much of my success to my involvement in University of Miami Television while I was an undergraduate. I spent an entire summer tirelessly trying to secure press credentials for the 2005 MTV Video Music Awards, held at the American Airlines Arena in Miami. I was positioned next to "Access Hollywood" and interviewed the executive producer. I told him I wanted to work for him one day. Nine years later, I interviewed with him for a job, gave him a DVD of that clip, and was hired.

In the media room at the VMAs, I met a manager from ABC News Radio and got her business card. When I graduated three years later, I reached out to her and she remembered me. She was very influential in getting me a desk assistant position as my first job out of college. I worked with assignment editors, producers, and on-air reporters to gather the information they needed to deliver all sorts of hard news stories that the network covered, including the 2008 Presidential election and 2008 Summer Olympics. My persistence and networking really paid off! I apply these tools each and every day in the workplace.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I hope to speak to you soon about potential opportunities at your station.

Sincerely,
Paige Mara Feigenbaum