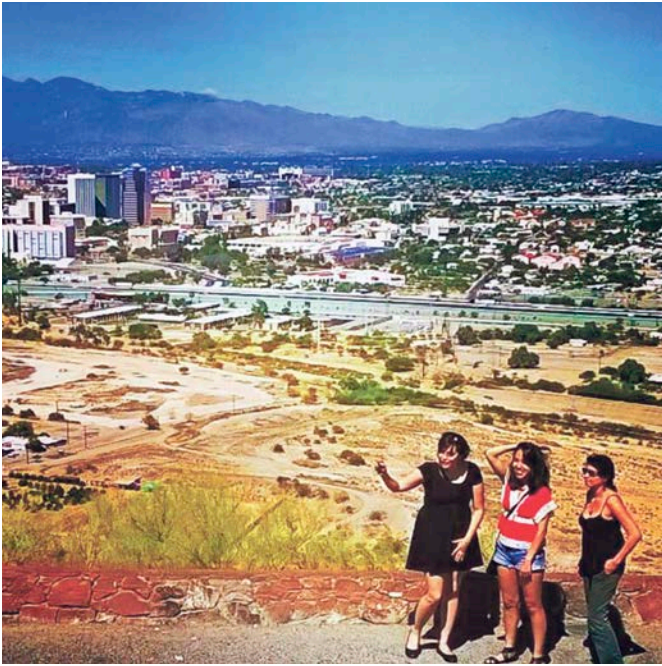
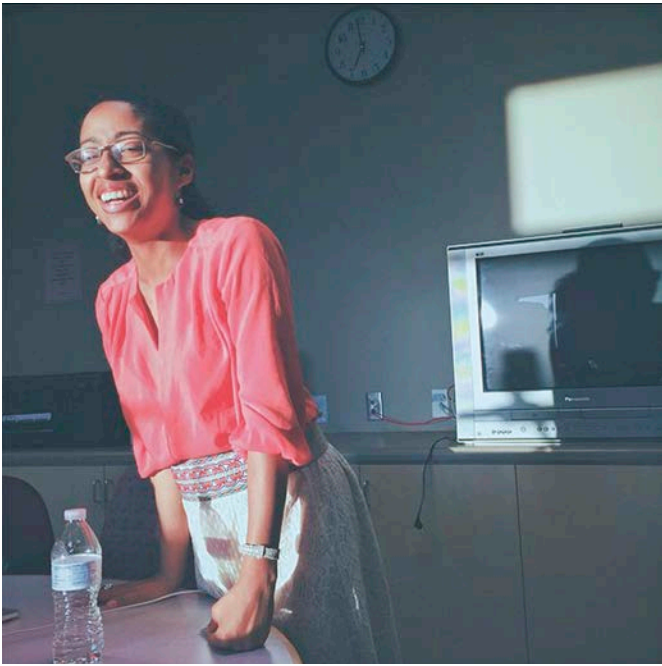




SARAH MCCLURE



JASMINE AGUILERA



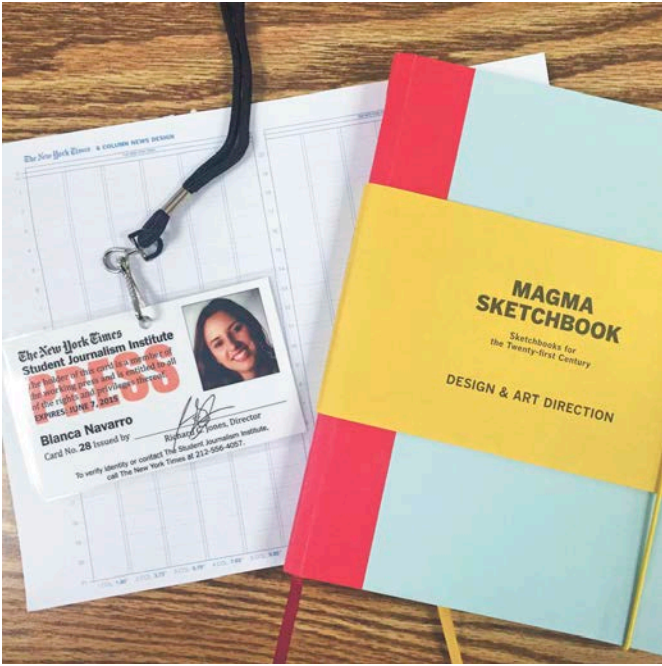
ANA M. RODRIGUEZ



YESSENIA FUNES



SANTIAGO MEJIA



BLANCA NAVARRO

MORE THAN BOOT CAMP Local news, Tucson's desert landscape and mentorship from the staff at The New York Times and area publications helped guide students' reporting at the Institute.

Student Journalists Reach a Desert Rich in Stories

Newsroom Combines Print, Online and Social Media Talent and Expertise

By **LYANNE ALFARO** and **RACHELLE KRYGIER**

The thirteenth year of The New York Times Student Journalism Institute was barely into its second day when Richard G. Jones, the director, seemed to sense something amiss. The 26 students, chosen from hundreds of applicants across the country, range from undergraduates to doctoral students, pursuing careers in reporting, editing, photography, videography, data visualization and design. Despite the accomplishments that helped bring them to the Institute, Mr. Jones could feel their anxiety. And that, he decided, deserved to be gently mocked. “You are here because you belong!” he exclaimed, eliciting waves of nervous laughter. The Times’s publisher, Arthur Ochs Sulzberger Jr., created the Institute to identify talented aspiring journalists early in their careers.

The Times works with the School of Journalism at the University of Arizona to host the Institute during odd-numbered years, when it offers the program to student members of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists. In other years, it is offered to student members of the National Association of Black Journalists. “We were impressed by the quantity and the quality” of the candidates, said Mr. Jones, an associate editor at The Times. “The students that we picked, we believe, are really among the best in the country.” The faculty includes present and former Times journalists including Bill Schmidt, who retired after more than 30 years in the newsroom, and Simone Oliver, a graduate of the first Institute, in 2003. She is now an audience development editor at The Times. This is the first Institute run by Mr. Jones, and it seeks to incorporate a focus on digital, audience development and social media. “We began 12 years ago as a boot camp that focused on a print product,” Mr. Jones said, “and we evolved into a web product, and I think increasingly we want to be more of a mobile product.” The program will also include brown-bag sessions with local reporters, law enforcement

officials and Times personnel, sharing their expertise. Tucson, which is close to the Mexican border, offers a wide range of topics for the student journalists: immigration, homelessness, crime and economic development are among the lines of reporting they were pursuing. Noelle Haro-Gomez, a photographer at the Institute and a Tucson native, said that although immigration is an important issue in the city, she is more interested in covering underreported social justice and local tribe issues. She is a recent graduate of the University of Arizona and was accepted to the program after applying three times. The Institute began on Sunday evening over an informal dinner at El Charro Cafe, where students and the Institute staff engaged in conversations about journalism and shared personal anecdotes. “I feel very excited, I feel nervous, and I feel blessed to be here,” said Yessenia Funes, who just graduated from SUNY Plattsburgh and will be working as a reporter. The morning after the welcome dinner, the participants gathered in the journalism department building at the university for orientation workshops, and gentle teasing and encourage-

ment from Mr. Jones. To illustrate what the students might accomplish during the two-week program, Mr. Jones showed a video of a child who, after learning to ride a bike, passionately motivates others to do the same. The students’ work will be posted each day online and will be published as a newspaper at the Institute’s conclusion. Ángel Franco, a photographer at The Times for 30 years who is attending the Institute for the second time, said he returned because it is one of the best things he has done in his life. “The energy here, the intelligence of the folks attending, their enthusiasm to learn,” he said. “I think it is the equivalent of creating a deeper romance for journalism.” Mr. Jones said he hoped that in two weeks students leave the Institute with good clips, experiences and relationships with faculty and classmates, as well as an understanding of the responsibility that comes with the power of journalism. “It’s about credibility, believability,” he said. “With that, we have a tremendous obligation to make sure we live up to the highest standards that we can.”



Jasmine Aguilera
University of Texas at El Paso
REPORTER

Jasmine Aguilera, 22, comes from a family of immigrants and was raised in El Paso, Tex., where the United States Border Patrol, Spanglish, Mexico license plates and murals of Chicano and Aztec history are part of daily life. Ms. Aguilera, a reporter at the Institute, became interested in journalism after a mentor showed her National Geographic Explorer documentaries. While finishing her undergraduate studies at the University of Texas at El Paso, she is interning at The Dallas Morning News and Al Día TX, a Spanish-language newspaper. She has been investigating topics such as refugee shelters and issues in the L.G.B.T. community.

Lyanne Alfaro
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
COPY EDITOR

Lyanne Alfaro’s father wanted her to become a doctor. But after looking into Lyanne Melendez’s work, the ABC 7 reporter her father named her after, Ms. Alfaro, 22, became interested in journalism. Her teachers at Northside College Preparatory High School in Chicago encouraged her to join the school newspaper. Ms. Alfaro, a first-generation college student, graduated from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign with a bachelor’s degree in journalism. She was a feature and entertainment writer but jumped into hard news. She is a copy editor at the Institute and is also reporting.



Ben Bartenstein
Macalester College
REPORTER

If you looked in the basement of Ben Bartenstein’s childhood home in rural Wisconsin, you would find a bin of book manuscripts he wrote in elementary school. They are vestiges of an early love of writing. He has not yet published a book, but Mr. Bartenstein, 20, can say he has had plenty of opportunities to write. As a student at Macalester College, he has written for the student newspaper and Minnesota Public Radio, among several other outlets. He continually looks to grow as a reporter and immerse himself in diverse communities with enthusiastic aspiring journalists. The search led him to the Institute.



Saiyna Bashir
Columbia College Chicago
PHOTOGRAPHER

Saiyna Bashir, 26, found herself in a crowd in Ferguson, Mo., after the announcement that there would be no indictment in the fatal shooting of Michael Brown. The Huffington Post asked permission to publish her Instagram photos from that night, and she went to a nearby bus stop to transfer the photos. Ms. Bashir hopes to cover events like that as a photojournalist and documentary filmmaker. Born in Karachi, Pakistan, she has a bachelor’s degree in journalism from Beaconhouse National University in Pakistan and is pursuing a graduate degree in public affairs reporting at Columbia College Chicago.