

Sarah McClure

Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism
VIDEOGRAPHER

Sarah McClure, a video journalist at the Institute, first connected with her family's native Mexico while zip-lining through Puerto Vallarta's jungle with the country's president at the time, Felipe Calderón. She was on the production team for the television series "Mexico: The Royal Tour." Shortly after, she decided to pursue a career in multimedia journalism.

Ms. McClure, from Orange County, Calif., has a master's degree from the Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism. After completing her undergraduate degree at Chapman University, she worked at The Los Angeles Daily Journal.



"The energy here, the intelligence of the folks attending, their enthusiasm to learn. I think it is the equivalent of creating a deeper romance for journalism."

ÁNGEL FRANCO | Photographer, The New York Times



Santiago Mejia

City College of San Francisco
PHOTOGRAPHER

While in high school, Santiago Mejia only considered photography a hobby. He never imagined it would become his profession.

At City College of San Francisco, however, he wanted to become a doctor to save lives. Mr. Mejia's classes consisted mostly of math and science with one exception: photojournalism. His friend suggested he join the college newspaper and Mr. Mejia joined as a photographer. He later became the editor in chief.

Mr. Mejia, an intern at the San Francisco Chronicle and a photographer at the Institute, he believes he can still save lives as a photojournalist.

Blanca Navarro

California State University, Fullerton
DESIGNER

Blanca Navarro became immersed in design at a young age and has worked to keep improving her skills and learn more about what she loves.

Ms. Navarro, 21, spent most of her childhood in Anaheim, Calif.

Now a senior at California State University, Fullerton, she is pursuing a bachelor's degree in fine art with a concentration in graphic design.

Ms. Navarro is on staff at TUSK Magazine, her school's yearly magazine, where she works as a graphic designer and strives to make the same impact as a designer for the Institute this summer.



Paula Ospina

Rochester Institute of Technology
PHOTOGRAPHER

Paula Ospina picked up a camera for the first time in the ninth grade.

She has long wanted to be a photojournalist, but in today's changing industry, she hopes to incorporate video and audio as well.

Ms. Ospina is a sophomore at Rochester Institute of Technology, majoring in photojournalism.

She works as a freelance photographer for Reporter Magazine, run by R.I.T. students.

Ms. Ospina is a photographer at the Institute and she hopes that it will help her become more of a visual storyteller.



Tahseen Rabbi

Stony Brook University
VIDEOGRAPHER

A friend suggested that Tahseen Rabbi apply for a journalism program in China. She signed up that same day. Journalism Without Walls, a three-week reporting program, removed any hesitations Ms. Rabbi, a former pre-med student, held about pursuing journalism. She reported in print and video in Beijing, Hutang and Yangzhou and took journalism classes with Chinese students.

Ms. Rabbi, a videographer at the Institute, received her degree in journalism from Stony Brook University in May.

"China taught me that good journalism is a privilege," she said. The program was one of the "best decisions I've ever made."



Polo Rocha

University of Wisconsin-Madison
REPORTER

Polo Rocha would use Mondays to catch up on sleep. Rest was hard to come by for this University of Wisconsin-Madison student.

"I work at the student paper, so I literally came home at, like, 4 a.m.," said Mr. Rocha, 22, the former managing editor at The Badger Herald, in a chipper tone.

He is a double major in political science and journalism. What drives him to such sleep-depriving lengths? The possibility of making a difference.

Last year he received a fellowship from the National Newspaper Association and he will be the social media editor at his school paper in the fall.

Ana M. Rodriguez

CUNY Graduate School of Journalism
VIDEOGRAPHER

Ana Maria Rodriguez, 28, grew up in Colombia and spent her summers in the countryside.

She is a videographer at the Institute, inspired at a young age to use her lens to tell stories of the people there and their struggles.

Ms. Rodriguez graduated from Georgia State University in 2011.

She attends the health and science reporting program at the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism in New York, where she is specializing in visual journalism.

She will start a summer internship at The Village Voice in New York after the Institute.



Kayla Samoy

University of Arizona
REPORTER

Kayla Samoy, 22, has one of the coolest titles on her résumé. She was the NASA Space Grant Intern at The Arizona Daily Star, covering technology and business for the paper, which is based in Tucson.

Ms. Samoy moved to Tucson when she was 4. Growing up, she did not consider going into journalism. It was not until she started college that her mother suggested majoring in the field. Since then, Ms. Samoy hasn't looked back.

She is a recent graduate from the University of Arizona with a bachelor's in journalism and is a reporter at the Institute.



Samantha Schmidt

Indiana University, Bloomington
REPORTER

On New Year's Eve, Samantha Schmidt's family members grab suitcases and take turns running around the block several times at her grandmother's home in Costa Rica — an interesting family ritual.

Ms. Schmidt's family takes a yearly trip to visit her mother's family in Costa Rica, which sparked her interest in traveling. A rising senior at Indiana University, she will study abroad in Jordan this fall, putting her majors in Arabic and journalism to work and getting closer to becoming a foreign correspondent.

Ms. Schmidt, a reporter at the Institute, said she wants to find stories in unfamiliar places.



Jonah Smith

Columbia Graduate School of Journalism
INTERACTIVE GRAPHICS EDITOR

Jonah Smith, a graduate student at Columbia's Graduate School of Journalism and School of Engineering and Applied Science, is concentrating on data-driven journalism. Mr. Smith, 23, is an interactive graphics editor at the Institute.

As an undergraduate at Columbia he studied statistics and sociology. During that time, Mr. Smith was an intern at BuroHappold Engineering, working with the sustainability team to develop visualization tools.

Mr. Smith said it's challenging to present data in a clear and interesting way, and he wants to continue developing his skills.

Keila Vizcarra

California State University, Northridge
DESIGNER

With an acceptance letter from California State University, Northridge, Keila Vizcarra broke a pattern in her family. Ms. Vizcarra, 20, of Victorville, Calif., is the youngest of five and the first in her family to pursue a bachelor's degree.

She recently completed her second year as a designer for the university's student-run newspaper, The Sundial, which is one of her greatest accomplishments so far. But Ms. Vizcarra won't stop there. She hopes to work in radio news, preferably for National Public Radio, as a voice for immigrant rights. Ms. Vizcarra is a designer at the Institute.

