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## Tried & true: Journalistic license

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# Journalistic license



When **Mollie Auran** of Kent, Ohio, graduated from high school four years ago, she knew that she wanted to pursue a career in journalism. She wasn't so sure, however, about which college she should attend.

The University of Missouri, which has one of the finest journalism schools in the country, had offered her an attractive scholarship package. But she also firmly believed that Furman offered her something she couldn't get at Missouri.

"I decided to come to Furman because I didn't think a journalism degree would make me a smarter person," Auran says. "I felt like I couldn't start writing and learning how to be a journalist until I knew more about everything. And that's really why I came to Furman — to learn more about everything."

As it turned out, Auran's choice couldn't have been better. Not only did she get her liberal arts education, receiving a degree in communication studies and philosophy this spring, but her internship experiences ultimately landed her a job with the CBS News program "48 Hours," a position that would make any journalism graduate envious.

The course for Auran's career path was set in the spring of her freshman year. As part of an introductory philosophy class,

she was required to observe a "real-world situation" and write a paper about how it related to what she had learned in class. Because she was interested in journalism, she chose to observe at WHNS-Fox 21, a Greenville television station.

As luck would have it, the station was looking for an undergraduate intern. So Auran went to work right away, editing tape for the weekend shows and doing whatever else was needed. She worked approximately 20 hours per week during the school year and put in 40-hour weeks during the summer.

After her sophomore year, she decided it was time to push the internship envelope. She visited Charles Brock, Furman's assistant dean for undergraduate research and internships, and perused his "internship bible" for the most "competitive" thing she could find — which turned out to be a summer internship with CBS News in New York.

Auran didn't have high hopes. More than 3,000 people applied for just a few spots, and she was competing against some of the best and brightest journalism students in the country. But few could match Auran's experience outside the classroom, and she got the call to go to New York.

"I had a better chance than I thought," she says. "After all, how many college students have worked at a professional TV

station in one of the largest markets in the country?"

Auran was assigned to the news program "48 Hours," and her summer in New York was everything she hoped it would be. She met Dan Rather, saw Andy Rooney every day in the CBS cafeteria, and worked long, hectic hours during the coverage of the John F. Kennedy, Jr., plane crash. Several of the stories she helped research made it to the air.

CBS News was pleased with Auran's work. After she finished the 1999 fall term at Furman, she returned to New York over the holidays to help the network with its millennium show. And once she finished her degree requirements following winter term, she joined "48 Hours" full time as a member of the research and development staff.

"I feel my liberal arts background has given me a better understanding of the issues that are involved in the news," says Auran, who returned to campus for graduation exercises in May. "It prepared me well for what I'm doing now."

— Vince Moore