

Finding the Story

Journalism major Jordyn Haime covers the beat while creating her own story

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Journalism professor Tom Haines describes Jordyn Haime as “driven by an internal compass set toward social justice.” As an [English journalism](#) major, Jordyn has written breaking news and stories for UNH’s student newspaper, The New Hampshire (TNH), participated in campus activism against street harassment, taken leadership roles in Hillel, worked for the Sexual Harassment and Rape Prevention Program (SHARPP), and studied abroad in China. All of these positions put Jordyn in the middle of other students’ experiences, and at times, she found herself in the middle of conflicts. As

another nominator, Reverend Larry Brickner-Wood, notes, “Her pieces were always well written, fair, balanced and sometimes challenging, especially to the status quo.”

During her first year, she collaborated with SHARPP as a community educator to construct a wall display against street harassment. As students walked by, they were invited to write their experiences with street harassment to help raise awareness and start a campus conversation about making the community safer and more inclusive. This experience with SHARPP eventually led to Jordyn taking on a role as a peer advocate during her sophomore year. Now, she also holds a staff position within SHARPP as a marketing and communications assistant. Additionally, she has been a leader at annual events such as Take Back the Night and the Rally to End Sexual Violence. She also took part in SHARPP’s #MeToo movement.

Jordyn found herself pushing her comfort zone again when she was asked to be a program coordinator for UNH Hillel — the Jewish student organization — at the end of her first year. The following semester, she began writing for TNH, which eventually led to her applying for a staff position. What began as small scale reporting — covering local events like film screenings, for example — led to writing feature stories on the demolition of Forest Park and other topics on campus culture. It wasn’t easy, Jordyn said, to write about such personal and hot-button issues, but she knew it was important to share the stories of the community she was now a part of.

“I saw that as how powerful journalism can be, and how much it can actually make an impact on people’s lives,” she said. “I think sometimes in school and in classes when you’re just talking about journalism in a classroom setting, it doesn’t seem real or as important when you’re doing something like that.”

"Realizing that I could do that [reporting in and on China] was just a big deal in realizing how mature I've become over the years and how capable I am of being independent."

Jordyn’s passion for journalism continued to expand, and she obtained internships and writing opportunities at New Hampshire Public Radio, The Lowell Sun and Foster’s Daily Democrat. Through all of this, Jordyn began to take Chinese language courses and found another passion in that language and culture. It wasn’t long before she found herself studying abroad in China, where she discovered her long-term goal of reporting in and on China. “Realizing that I could do that was just a big deal in realizing how mature I’ve become over the years and how capable I am of being independent,” Jordyn said.

Jordyn is grateful for the scholarships she received during her four years at UNH, including the Temple Beth Israel Scholarship, the Class of 1960 Scholarship and the Lloyd and Beverley Jordan Education Fund scholarship. She has also received the Michael Kelly Journalism Scholarship (named for Michael Kelly '79, the first U.S. journalist killed during the Iraq War in 2003) and the Robert G. LeBlanc Memorial

scholarship (named for UNH geography professor Robert LeBlanc, who was killed during the terror attacks of Sept. 11, 2001).

"The financial support I have received through UNH has helped my family and I so much over the years — these scholarships are what have made my journey possible."

To advance her career goals, Jordyn will return to China sometime during the next year. In April, she was offered a Fulbright grant to fund a year of research in Nanjing; the start date is still being determined. Through the support of her Fulbright grant, Jordyn will report on Jewish studies taught at Chinese universities and how that academic field is supported by the Chinese government.

Reflecting on four years at UNH, Jordyn notes that her high school self would never have imagined being capable of doing the things she has accomplished as a college student. Jordyn says she was shy and introverted at the beginning of her college career; her insecurity was exacerbated by the fact that she lived alone on a floor full of doubles and was pursuing a major that required her to interview strangers. She remembers seeing students on her floor begin to form friend groups. She knew that if she did not pressure herself to build relationships and get involved, she would not be making the most of the UNH experience. It was not too long before Jordyn was part of her floor's social circles herself.

Jordyn hopes future UNH students are able to find their courage to empower themselves to experience things that are unfamiliar to them. After all, doing so can lead to wonderful stories.

"Go out of your comfort zone," Jordyn said. "I've always been so quiet and uncomfortable...but I saw that there were a lot of opportunities that were [at UNH], and I took advantage of them. It's definitely paid off."

Jordyn is a 2019-2020 Create Your Own Story winner. This initiative features students who, in their own way, have strived to make the most of their time at UNH. More at <https://www.unh.edu/mub/create-your-own-story>.

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