

JayMac

Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication Alumni Association



GAYLORD ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT **Chelsea Young, '09 and '11** **Editor-in-Chief of So Scottsdale** **magazine and author of "The Color** **of Mother" children's book**

"Be bold, be persistent, and if you don't ask,
the answer is always no."

Chelsea Young's dad once told her, "You just have to get on the highway, then you can choose your exit." Her current professional highway is an editorial one in her roles at So Scottsdale magazine and as the author of "The Color of Mother" children's book. The two-time Gaylord graduate, who earned a bachelor's degree in journalism with an emphasis in professional writing in 2009 and a master's degree in professional writing in 2011, recently shared more about her time at Gaylord and career so far.

What is your favorite memory from your time at Gaylord College?

My favorite memory at Gaylord College wasn't actually *at* the college, but it was *through* it! The summer before my junior year, I went to Puerto Rico on a Gaylord traveling writing program with Kathryn Jenson White and Meta Carstarphen. This was my first taste of traveling internationally and it was such a fun, meaningful immersion into a different culture. While there, I got to delve deeper into the craft of travel writing, which remains a passion today.

Did you have a favorite faculty/staff

magazine including conceptualizing and planning content, assigning articles and photo shoots to freelancers, being the face of the publication at local events, budgeting and invoicing, managing our team of 15-plus freelancers, trafficking content and – of course – writing select content, editing all content, and proofreading the entire publication each month before we go to print.

What are other writing projects you have done?

Like many creatives, I have my hands in a number of projects, including freelance writing and editing through my company, Young Creative. My passion project, however, is the recent publication of my first book, "The Color of Mother." As the first book in a series I created called Color Everything, it is a tribute to moms based on a poem I wrote for my own mom when I was just 11 years old! Through this book – which is for children up to age 10 and moms of any age – my mission is to remind kids they are loved and acknowledge moms for who they are. And yes, if you order it online and note you are a fellow Gaylord grad, I am happy to sign it for you!

member at Gaylord?

There are many individuals who helped and inspired me during my time at Gaylord, though two in particular had a profound impact on me. Mel Odom provided much wisdom to me, as much for my writing skills as for navigating college and life in general. Deborah Chester saw my creative writing potential before it had been honed in a classroom setting. I am grateful to both of them for cultivating my craft and believing in me from the onset.

How did your career path lead you to So Scottsdale magazine?

Some of the best advice I've ever received is from my dad, who said: "You just have to get on the highway, then you can choose your exit." It took me a while to get on the editorial highway. After graduate school, I moved to San Francisco and worked a series of odd jobs while freelance writing for Where San Francisco magazine and a beauty blog. In 2013, I moved to Scottsdale, Arizona, (sight unseen, no less) and took on a role with Where in that market. I was an editor at Where's publications in the Phoenix-Scottsdale area as well as in Denver and Tucson before becoming an editor at AAA Arizona Highroads (now Via) and then getting my current role at So Scottsdale in 2015. Looking back, my dad was right about getting on the metaphorical highway! I've been speeding along – albeit mindfully – ever since.

Describe your work at So Scottsdale.

The role of editor-in-chief is multifaceted, and it involves much more than editing! I actually lead workshops to college students about what I think being an editor is, and I tell them it's 10 percent writing, 20 percent editing, 30 percent management and 40 percent logistics and planning. As the only editor at So Scottsdale, my role is quite in-depth. I am involved in all aspects of managing the

What do you consider to be the most significant moments of your career so far?

There are a few: landing my first editorial job, becoming the editor-in-chief of a major luxury lifestyle publication (So Scottsdale), publishing my first book, and earning distribution of the book in nearly a dozen brick-and-mortar stores as well as online. In great part due to my Gaylord professors' influence on me, I was actually an adjunct faculty member at Grand Canyon University in fall 2018, where I taught a professional writing course called Writing for Advertising and Public Relations. Teaching at the collegiate level was a dream of mine, and it's one I'd like to do again when time permits.

What advice would you give to current students aspiring to a career in mass communication?

Be bold, be persistent, and if you don't ask, the answer is always no. And, perhaps most importantly, the old adage is true: It's all about who you know. Before I got on the "highway," I applied to countless jobs. I quickly learned that following up is key and to ask publications if they were hiring, whether full-time or freelance. It was because of a connection I made through freelancing that I got my first job as an editor, which set me on the path to where I am now. Because of that, I am a firm believer in making and maintaining connections to people you meet along your journey. You never know where it may lead!

What do you do for fun outside of work?

I love spending time with my rescue dog (a Bichon mix), Hope. She now travels with me, which is a lot of fun! With "The Color of Mother," I do lots of exciting activities including author events, book readings and workshops with kids. These are actually part of my job as an editor but are also things I love to do anyway: trying new restaurants and traveling!



OU Gaylord College of Journalism & Mass Communication

[405-325-2721](tel:405-325-2721) | gaylordalumni@ou.edu |

<http://www.ou.edu/gaylord/jaymac>

[395 W. Lindsey](#)

[Room 3000](#)

[Norman, OK 73019](#)

Stay connected:

