

# ShoppTalk

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## Young Journalists Find Silver Lining in Tough Economy

**M**ost of them had little to no experience with online journalism. A few may have posted some of their school newspaper stories online. Though all recognized the importance of multimedia journalism, none could really explain why. But within a week, they would be expected to become nimble multimedia journalists capable of generating story ideas and telling those stories through video, audio and photographs. Would they pull it off?

They are the eight high school journalists who recently participated in the intense, third annual Washington Post Digital Workshop for Young Journalists from



The 2009 Post Digital Workshop young journalists. From left, front: Nina Gonzalez, Stafford High School (Va.); Ash Venkat, Annadale High School (Va.); Lynda Nguyen, Benjamin Banneker High School (D.C.); and Hojung Lee, Mount Hebron High School (Md.). Back: Naveed Siddiqui, Eleanor Roosevelt High School (Md.); Adam Turay, South County Secondary School (Va.); Alex Vinci, Bishop McNamara High School (Md.); and Nikki Kaul, McLean High School (Va.).

Aug. 10-14: Nina Gonzalez, Stafford High School (Va.); Nikki Kaul, McLean High School (Va.); Hojung Lee, Mount Hebron High School (Md.); Lynda Nguyen, Benjamin Banneker High School (D.C.); Naveed Siddiqui, Eleanor Roosevelt High School (Md.); Adam Turay, South County Secondary School (Va.); Ash Venkat, Annadale High School (Va.); and Alex Vinci, Bishop McNamara High School (Md.).

On their first day, Managing Editor **Raju Narisetti** explained how video, audio and photography are used to tell a story. He told the students, "Before, we had to explain everything in writing. Now, we can show people what we mean."

As part of the News



Managing Editor **Raju Narisetti** discusses newsrooms in the multimedia age.



Multimedia journalist **Megan Rossman** (holding the microphone) trains the students on how to use the Marantz audio recorder.

# Eastern 500 Facebook Sites Launch

By **Ade Ademisoye**  
ShopTalk Staff Writer

On Aug. 13, Community Relations launched the Eastern 500 Club and Eastern 500 Alumni Facebook groups. The two pages are a new feature of the 22-year-old partnership between The Post and Eastern Senior High School, where apart from rewarding students with \$500 for every semester that they maintain all As and Bs, the program also partners up students with Post volunteer mentors.

The pages will help publicize the program and provide a social communication forum for prospective students, alumni and mentors

Since 1987, the club has rewarded scholastic excellence by awarding money towards college. In order for students to receive their earned funds, they must graduate high school and enroll in a higher education institution. The partnership between The Post and Eastern traces back to the early '70s, when Post Co. Chairman **Don Graham** patrolled Eastern's neighborhood as a police officer.

Post employee and Eastern 500 Club alumna **Natasha Metts** explains, "The fact that we get a tangible reward for the work we put in is more than moving. It says to us that someone understands that what we're doing is not easy. We excel in an environment where it is not necessarily expected and this is oftentimes the only encouragement we are given. And the fact that the money goes towards school is just the push that some of us need."

The mentoring program provides the students with guidance and a shoulder to lean during trying times. **Tanya Loving**, a Post employee and a 500 Club mentor of 8 years, says "As a mentor, I think the most rewarding thing about the 500 Club is being able to guide a talented young person into



Eastern Senior High School Principal **William Chiselom** gives words of encouragement to Eastern 500 Club protégés during one of the club's workshops



The newly launched Eastern 500 Club Alumni Facebook page provides a way for past, present and future Eastern 500 Club members and their mentors to interact



Mentor **Tanya Loving**, IT, converses with her Eastern 500 Club protégé **Donise Jackson**.

being the best person they can be. Often, the protégé is an excellent student, but simply needs help dealing with everyday situations or transitioning into more independence."

One of the main goals of the Facebook sites is enticing prospective Eastern students to join by letting them read encouraging words from folks who have been in their shoes—Eastern 500 Club alumni. It also showcases The Post's unyielding commitment to education. And of course, it will help keep alumni and their mentors in contact long after the students graduate from Eastern.

"Well, everyone has a Facebook page, so why not have one for the 500 Club?" says Post employee and Eastern 500 Club alumna **Samantha Palmer**. "It's a great convenience for those students who want updates on the 500 Club, but don't have time to call or go to another website. Facebook seems to be bridging the gap between informative, valuable pages and personal profiles."

Eastern 500 Club alumnus and current employee **Emil Robinson** and Community Relations Manager **David Jones** created the two sites.

"We decided to launch a Facebook page for the 500 Club and the alumni because we wanted to provide a vehicle to enhance communication between mentors, protégés and program supporters," Jones says. "Emil Robinson, a graduate of Eastern [2005] was enormously successful in bringing alumni to last year's graduation celebration using his Facebook network. So with his expertise, he developed both pages. Ultimately, it is my belief that having an online presence through Facebook will help the 500 Club recruit more members, make itself known to a broader audience and inform members and mentors of the program's activities and benefits."

Literacy Project—a national initiative designed to teach young students “how to know what to believe” and to differentiate fact from fiction—USA Today’s Kathy Kiely explained the importance of cross-checking information and being very careful with potentially unreliable sites like Wikipedia.



Producer **Chris Hopkins** (sitting, right) plays the first video that the students recorded during the workshop.

The students then dove into developing their stories, which revolved around the impact of the economy on young people. The students pitched to education reporter **Valerie Strauss**, who offered feedback and helped narrow their focus.

On day two, billed as the “Getting the Tools” day, personal finance reporter **Ylan Mui** shared interviewing tips. Multimedia journalists **Whitney Shefte** and **Megan Rossman**, along with video producer **Francine Uenuma**, taught how to capture video and audio, and how to take photos, for a multimedia package. Producer **Katharine Jarmul** went over more advanced interactive applications and led a critiquing session on interactive graphics-heavy sites. Shefte and Rossman wrapped up Tuesday with hands-on instruction. Rossman taught them how to work the Marantz audio recorder, and Shefte used three HD Flip Cameras, made available by **Michael Ramey** from News IT, to capture video.

Shefte helped the students eliminate a few more possible story ideas that would not translate well to multimedia. The students now had their three

story ideas, which met the required criteria: the stories had to be newsworthy, they had to be told using multimedia and they had to be logistically feasible in the two-day window they had.

Kaul and Venkat dug into the impact that a bad economy might have on volunteerism after finding a statistic that suggested volunteerism was on the rise among young



Multimedia journalist **Whitney Shefte** goes over videotaping do and don'ts.

people. Gonzalez, Siddiqui and Turay focused on alternative jobs due to the scarcity of summer jobs for teens which research showed. And Lee, Nguyen and Vinci set out to assess the impact of the economy on the bottom line of education: students. Their research found that most schools’ budgets were getting cut and that salary freezes were widespread.

Each group faced unique challenges. Would the first team find one or two organizations with young volunteers in action on a casual Thursday afternoon? Would the second team find a couple of youngsters who have found a unique way to make some pocket money over the summer? And would the last team find a school principal willing to talk to them about the impact that the economy might be having on students’ education?

On Wednesday morning, sports blogger **Dan Steinberg** and producer **Jodi Westrick** discussed effective interactive journalism. Steinberg talked about his popular D.C. Sports Bog blog, and Westrick showed the students examples of engaging online journalism that reaches out to readers. The students were ready to go full throttle on their

stories.

The first team locked down two volunteer organizations. Turay from the second team had found three leads: a tennis instructor friend, a guitar instructor on Craig’s List and a street musician. On his way home the evening before, Turay had noticed the young pianist playing at the MacPherson Square Metro. Turay ap-



Student life beat reporter **Jenna Johnson** goes over last minute details with the team that she accompanied into the field.

proached the young man, who was braving the unbearable heat, and asked if he could interview him for a story. The pianist agreed and on Wednesday afternoon, led by producer **Chris Hopkins**, Gonzalez, Siddiqui and Turay headed out to conduct the workshop’s first interview.

In the meantime, Lee, Nguyen and Vinci frantically tried to secure a second and third interview with a principal. Though they had one elementary school principal from a suburban Virginia neighborhood, the third team wanted to find a principal running an older, more dilapidated school.

With interviews and equipment in hand, the three teams, chaperoned by Hopkins, reporter **Jenna Johnson** and Post Young Journalists Development Program Coordinator **Mario Iván Oña**, went into the field. They conducted interviews, took photos, captured audio and recorded video.

In the afternoon, Social Media Editor **Amy Kovac**, who led last year’s digital workshop, explained how social networking sites like Facebook, YouTube and Twitter could be used to share the students’ published work and also discussed some best

practices.

From Thursday afternoon until the very last minute of the workshop on Friday evening, the students—many of whom had no experience with Final Cut video editing—fast became efficient video editors. Shefte and intern videographer **John Johnston** guided the students with their editing from dawn until dusk. Rossman



Intern videographer **John Johnston** (standing) and USA Today producer **Quang Lam** (in blue) help one of the teams with their video editing.

and USA Today producer **Quang Lam** stopped by for several hours to help with the editing. At 6 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 14, the students were done with their three projects.

Going into it, the students expected to explore the negative aspects of the economic downturn, but instead they found a prevalent theme when it came to young people and the bad economy: the optimistic youth and those in charge of educating them are resilient. They found ways to overcome. And in some instances, the students found that the economy had prompted new, positive behavior like volunteering.

Notably, the digital workshop itself was engulfed by a positive spirit of volunteerism. Even though the newsroom is undergoing massive restructuring and most of the employees from Arlington are in the process of moving downtown, 24 Post volunteers stepped up to make the workshop happen.

The students’ work will be showcased in a few weeks and will be published on [washingtonpost.com](http://washingtonpost.com).

To view photos taken during the workshop, visit <http://tinyurl.com/np7hha>.

## Town Hall Meetings

Publisher **Katharine Weymouth**, along with Post President and General Manager **Steve Hills**, Post Digital General Manager **Goli Sheikholeslami** and Executive Editor **Marcus Brauchli** will host a series of town hall meetings to update employees on the relocation of the digital operation and other on going initiatives. They will also take questions.

### Thursday, Sept. 17

11 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Auditorium downtown.  
2:30 to 4:30 p.m.  
The Bistro in Arlington.

### Friday, Sept. 18

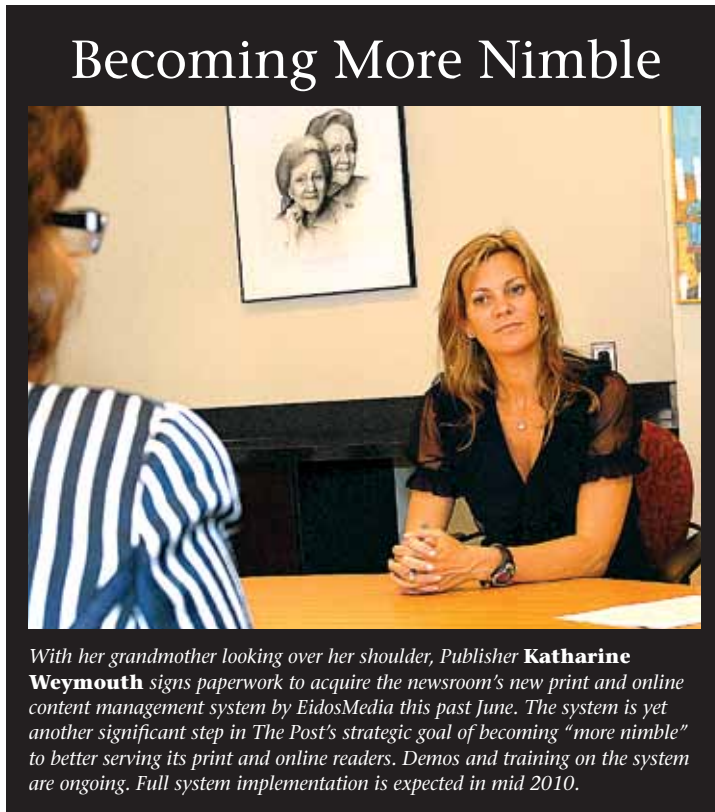
10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.  
The Bistro in Arlington.  
2:30 to 4:30 p.m.  
Auditorium downtown.

## Stone and Holt Weeks Memorial Fund

Stone and Holt Weeks, sons of former Post Style writer **Linton Weeks** and his wife, Jan, died in a tragic car accident several weeks ago. The family has set up a foundation for anyone wishing to honor their boys and make a tax-deductible contribution in their memory. Contributions should be sent to: The Stone and Holt Weeks Memorial Fund, c/o The Community Foundation, 1201 15th St. N.W., Suite 420 Washington, D.C., 2005.

## eMentoring

Interested in mentoring elementary school students from the convenience of your own computer? The In2Books national campaign pairs adult pen pals with



*With her grandmother looking over her shoulder, Publisher **Katharine Weymouth** signs paperwork to acquire the newsroom's new print and online content management system by EidosMedia this past June. The system is yet another significant step in The Post's strategic goal of becoming "more nimble" to better serving its print and online readers. Demos and training on the system are ongoing. Full system implementation is expected in mid 2010.*

# Becoming More Nimble

third-, fourth- and fifth-graders in under-resourced environments. To find out more, visit [www.in2books.com](http://www.in2books.com) or contact [onam@washpost.com](mailto:onam@washpost.com).

## Correction

The last ShopTalk's "In the Green Corner" segment incorrectly stated that reducing your driving speed from 70 mph to 55 mph can reduce your fuel efficiency by 23 percent. I should have stated that it increases it by that amount.

## ShopTalk Survey

If you have not completed the ShopTalk survey yet, please take a couple of minutes to do so at <http://tinyurl.com/m893fq>.

## Post Gift Items For Sale

In August, the Purchasing Department will be liquidating selected Post and Post Media logo-emblazoned promotional items. This is an opportunity to purchase gifts and giveaway items at half-price, while supplies last. Cost center codes, personal checks and exact change for all purchases will be accepted. All sales are final—no refunds, exchanges or returns. Sale hours are 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. daily on the first floor, near L Street entrance and next to Security Center. Contact Tammy at [johnsontt@washpost.com](mailto:johnsontt@washpost.com) with any questions.

## In the Green Corner

### FACT:

Environmental friendly, citrus-based solvents are used to clean The Post's presses.

### GREEN TIP:

The Natural Resources Defense Council recommends using power strips to switch off televisions, home theater equipment and stereos not in use. Even in standby mode, their combined consumption is equivalent to leaving a 75- or 100-watt light bulb on continuously (<http://www.nrdc.org/air/energy/genenergy.asp>)



## GOOD NEWS

## News From News

- The Post will be launching a more robust local home page in the fall. Leading the effort are **Michael McPhate** and **Justin Jovenal** on mornings, **Chris Sanford** and **Meghan Louttit** on afternoons and **Terri Rugar** and **Eric Athas** on nights.

# Marketplace

**FOR RENT:** 3 BR, 2.5 BA brick townhouse on Bradley Blvd in Bethesda. Rent would be \$866 per month plus utilities (landlord pays water). 10-min. safe walk to Bethesda Metro. Walking distance to Bethesda downtown shops, restaurants and bars. Good size kitchen, living room, dining room and porch. It's an end unit, so more windows to bring in natural sunlight. Contact Jessica at 443-992-3504 or [jessicaroenick@gmail.com](mailto:jessicaroenick@gmail.com).

**FOR SALE:** Boy's Redskins fall/winter coat. Good condition, size 12. Contact Elizabeth at x4-5128.

### MARKETPLACE DEADLINE:

Close of business on Fridays. Please include your name, extension and phone number. Ads are for Post Media and Digital employees. E-mail ads to [shoptalk@washpost.com](mailto:shoptalk@washpost.com) or [onam@washpost.com](mailto:onam@washpost.com). Ads will run for two issues unless otherwise requested. ShopTalk reserves the right to publish and edit all ads.