

Rocky Mountain Student Media Corporation

Collegian ♦ Campus TV ♦ KCSU-FM ♦ College Avenue
LSC Box 13, Colorado State University
Fort Collins, CO 80523-8033

November 3, 2014

TO: 2015-2016 Executive Editor applicant
FROM: Larry Steward, RMSMC President
SUBJECT: Application process

Thank you for your interest in the RMSMC's student Executive Editor (EE). Please contact Kate Winkle, current EE; Neill Woelk, RMSMC's journalism adviser and EE search committee chair; or me if you have questions.

The ideal candidate for this position is a motivated self-starter who works well with others, delegates appropriately, and creates a welcoming environment. Ideal skills include advanced writing and editing; an understanding of workflows and technology for print, digital and broadcast media; strong organizational abilities; and, a commitment to motivating others to work as a team to meet organizational deadlines. Because media are regularly evolving, flexibility and adaptability to change are necessary. Due to changes in the newspaper industry, primarily declining revenues for print editions and decreased distribution, during 2015-16 it's possible the Collegian may be printed less than five days a week, a decision that'll be made during the spring 2015.

Your application packet should include:

1. A one-page application letter to: Executive Editor Search Committee;
2. A completed application form (on line at collegian.com);
3. A resume;
4. A position paper (also attached); and,
5. Three letters of reference.

Applications will be accepted until the position is filled, but to ensure consideration, email a PDF of your complete application packet to Neill.Woelk@colostate.edu by **noon on Friday, Nov. 21**.

Each applicant will make a presentation to staff and discuss their visions and goals on Tuesday, Dec. 2. The search committee interview is scheduled for Wednesday, Dec. 3.

The EE will train during spring 2015 and serve through Dec. 31, 2015, subject to re-appointment for spring 2016. Ideally, the EE will be available during the eight-week, 2015 summer session but this is negotiable.

The EE hires other student editors who form a management team that works cooperatively with professional staff. The EE will need to hire up to five editors for work study positions as well as five TV students (four television news producer-anchors and an equipment manager) prior to Feb. 2, 2015, so these students can apply for merit work study for the 2015-16 academic year.

During the academic year the EE will earn \$285 per week for 16 weeks per semester. The EE must have at least eight office hours per week, which will be paid through work study. The EE and all students must be enrolled at CSU, degree-seeking, and carrying at least nine or more semester hours per semester (six hours for graduate students). A credit hours exemption may apply for students during their last semester prior to graduation but students must be enrolled.

EXECUTIVE EDITOR JOB DESCRIPTION

BACKGROUND: Starting this academic year, news, sports, entertainment, and opinion content were organized under the Executive Editor (EE) and two top associate editors – the Production and Design Manager and the Content Managing Editor. Students working in this converged, digital first media organization will produce TV news; collegiancentral.com and Collegian print editions; and, student blogs. Due to the need to comply with FCC rules and regulations, KCSU news staff will work closely with the EE and staff but will remain under the direction of the KCSU station manager and broadcast operations manager.

The EE and staff unites the workflow within all of student media's newsrooms and, in turn, result in collaboration between print, video, audio, and photography. All of the content will flow through the online product to provide readers, viewers and listeners frequently updated news and information that's fresh and moving daily. The student experience will closely parallel the professional media and will be themed around collaboration across platforms and media. Paid student staff and volunteers will specialize in one medium but will be trained to be proficient in all media. Staff can also work on up to two desks, which means students will be able to learn a wide variety of media skills, e.g., news writing for print, magazines and the web; photography and shooting and editing video; and, design and production across multiple platforms.

The executive editor's job is to oversee all newsroom operations, work with the professional staff to help establish a news vision and best practices for reporting for all platforms, assure the staff adheres to the Code of Ethics, empower newsroom leaders to create dedicated news and production teams, and act as an administrator. The duties include:

- Chairs a committee to hire News Content and Production/Design managing editors
- Directly oversees managing editors
- Oversees, along with the President and the newsroom adviser, news budgets
- Works closely with other RMSMC student leaders to build a unified staff
- When needed, makes final decisions regarding production and publications
- Provides a vision for the newsroom and each of the news products (online, print, broadcast)
- Is the key liaison with other leaders on campus, both students and faculty/staff
- Establishes training regimens
- Provides direction for news media products
- Seeks guidance from advisers and RMSMC's lawyer regarding sensitive content issues
- Ensures a digital-first model is deployed throughout the newsroom
- Ensures a welcoming environment and students are properly trained and processed

Collegian print and digital media serve as focal points for student life at Colorado State by providing a forum for the exchange of ideas and opinions, information about events, and news of general student interest. An important goal is to focus on local campus oriented content that is of interest to student readers and presented in well designed, innovative formats. The organization's mission statement recognizes the needs to:

- Produce nationally recognized student media that enhances students' undergraduate education through training and hands on experience in media methods and news gathering, management, ethics, responsibilities, and community service;
- Provide media access to individual students and student organizations by reporting news and features of interest to the campus and by providing forums for student expression and opinions;
- Create and maintain a welcoming environment for staff and visitors; and,
- Produce media that emphasize local, student-oriented articles, photos and campus diversity and interests.

Because of the key role they serve, the Executive Editor and all staff have a responsibility to be guided by audience — rather than self — interests. The EE and staff are to aspire to serve the truth by providing balanced, complete, accurate, fair reports and to maintain a clear distinction between news reports and expressions of opinion. While students enjoy considerable latitude in designated expressions of opinion, such as in editorials and columns, partisanship that knowingly departs from the truth or serves to promote individual self-interests constitute a violation of the public trust. The EE and all staff are to adhere to the RMSMC Code of Ethics, the SPJ Code of Ethics, and RMSMC adopted codes and administrative policies and procedures for expenditures and payroll.

All staff are expected to show respect for the dignity, privacy, rights and well-being of everyone and to avoid discriminatory coverage or practices. The editor and management staff also are responsible for creating a welcoming environment for all other newsroom staff and visitors.

The student media exist to serve the students of Colorado State and the University campus. Staff members are accountable to their peers, who are encouraged to voice their grievances. If forums, letters to the editor, and personal meetings fail to adequately provide redress for complainants, staff members are to explain the complainant's rights to appeal to RMSMC's president or general manager.

RMSMC Mission Statement

The Rocky Mountain Student Media Corporation, an independent non-profit organization, is dedicated to community service and enhancing the educational mission of Colorado State University by empowering, training and equipping students to excel in journalistic and other media methods, ethics, critical thinking, and management.

RMSMC Goals

The primary goals of the RMSMC are to:

- Commit to uphold truth, fairness, integrity, independence, accountability, accuracy, professionalism, and minimizing harm as stated in the RMSMC's codes of ethics;
- Create and maintain a welcoming environment and diversity in staffing, media content, and access through responsiveness and outreach;
- Empower students through training and practical experience to become thoughtful, ethical, and skilled media producers;
- Operate in a socially and financially responsible manner;
- Protect student control over media content, free from prior restraint or censorship;
- Recognize both the unique characteristics of each medium and the value of working together to maximize benefits for listeners, viewers, and readers;
- Remain abreast of media technology, equipment and training to provide students with the necessary tools to succeed; and,
- Serve the community by delivering relevant and timely news, information, and entertainment, and maintaining the public trust by ensuring the public's business is conducted in an open and transparent manner.

EXECUTIVE EDITOR APPLICANT POSITION PAPER

Please prepare a position paper to accompany your application by responding briefly to the following questions. Your response should be typed and identify each question you're answering.

1. How would you create training and other learning opportunities for reporters, designers, photographers, TV and digital media content producers?
2. What experience have you had in meeting deadlines and in motivating others to meet them?
3. If you're hired for this position, what skills do you need to improve upon, and how are you planning to prepare for this position?
4. What do you feel are the most likely sources of legal problems for a digital media and printed newspaper, and what steps would you take to avoid these problems?
5. The EE will have the opportunity to work with people from diverse economic, religious, ethnic, and social backgrounds. Describe your experiences in working with others and explain how you would use your background to create a welcoming environment.
6. To facilitate the best student-oriented coverage possible, how would you envision organizing the news teams (such as using a beat or other regular news gathering strategy or strategies)?
7. What do you like most about the digital media first concept and why? How do you think this process will improve what the RMSMC offers readers, viewers, and listeners?
8. As the Executive Editor of a newspaper, TV news programming, and website that's intended to serve students, what would you do in terms of content and design to encourage as many readers and viewers as possible?
9. How would you increase student participation in the newsroom through the recruitment and retention of student volunteers?
10. What role, if any, do you envision for student "user generated content," such as Ram Talk?
11. Describe your management style and how you feel it would benefit the organization.
12. Describe your experience with the newsroom environment today. What do you like/not like and what would you do to improve it?
13. Of the many approaches to digital first media, in your opinion what are the most appropriate approaches to implementing digital first media in student media and why? For example, is it more important to post news first and then verify or to verify prior to posting?
14. Media heads have to separate personal and professional interests when working with staff members. What is your strategy for dealing with how to separate these two areas in the event a staff member is not living up to professional expectations?

Interests and hobbies _____

Memberships in clubs and organizations _____

Reason for seeking employment here? _____

Additional comments _____

REFERENCES

(Name and Phone Number)

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE _____

Additional material and resumes may be attached. Colorado State University and RM Student Media are equal opportunity/affirmative action employers and comply with all federal and Colorado laws, regulations, and executive orders regarding affirmative action requirements in all programs.

FOR OPTIONAL OFFICE USE ONLY

Interview date _____ Interviewed by _____

Disposition: Hired Letter sent Saved on file

Editor/Manager's signature _____ Hired _____ Referred _____

Notes and/or comments _____

Employment Status: Paid Volunteer