

2014 Research Resources and Small Equipment Program
Office of the Associate Provost for Research and Graduate Studies
Council of Research Officers Howard University
Research Grant Proposal

Jennifer C. Thomas, Assistant Professor
Dept. of Media, Journalism & Film
Howard University School of Communications
Jennifer.thomas@howard.edu

Introduction

In partnership with the other concentrations in the Department of Media, Journalism and Film at Howard University, this small equipment grant will help fund items to be used for broadcast journalism research for faculty and students in the School of Communications.

As noted in communications@howard.edu, the purpose of the Department of Media, Journalism and Film is to “prepare students for the media world of today and the future through core and cluster courses. The Department addresses current industry standards, technological trends of convergence and community needs, while meeting the university’s historic mission.” This concentration shares in the common concerns of communicating in effective ways at the local, regional, national and global levels.

Broadcast journalists within the MJFC need to be on the cutting-edge of trends, technologies and current events that affect our discipline and individual research. One of the focuses of this research involves the documentation and study of media ethics. This study is

Jennifer Thomas, Dept. of Media, Journalism & Film

impacted by and reflects the ever changing demographics of the viewing audience. In this case, residents in the Washington, D.C., Virginia and Maryland areas (DMV). By interviewing, recording and documenting residents, businesses, industry and the like, the journalist as researcher will be able to accurately document responses to issues dealing with media coverage, convergence, disparities and newsgathering. The results of this effort will be documented in news magazine short and long-form reporter packages and may be broadcast on a new magazine format program that will broadcast from Howard University's WHUT TV, the first and only Public Broadcasting Station (PBS) member station licensed to and operated by a predominantly African-American institution. Likewise, this will allow real-world hands-on experience for the broadcast journalism and media students to serve in various roles including both editorial and production-- shooting, editing and producing packages and segments.

This proposal is for camera equipment and a small vehicle for faculty within the School of Communications MJF Department.

Scope of Research

The research will involve various methodologies, including practical imperial research involving interviews with individuals and groups, along with ethnographic studies. Basic theoretical research will also be required which will involve transportation to physical locations with archival information. The results of the research will impact the humanities, and history as well as Social Science. Finally, the study will also include journalistic research including various written and notably video reporting techniques. This research will be conducted by both broadcast journalism faculty (3 fulltime) and five to ten (5-10) advanced broadcast journalism

students. The equipment will provide cameras and editing software for at least three persons. The vehicle will also transport of up to four persons at a time to areas outside of the DC Metropolitan area not accessible by the Washington Metro Authority.

The impact of the research and programming will be invaluable. It will provide historical references to many of the current dilemmas facing media practitioners, professionals and the society as a whole. The authors of the study will be the professors of the Media, Journalism & Film department, who are award-winning renowned journalists and media producers as well as research scholars. The reports and programming will be broadcast to millions of television viewers and more viewers on the Web.

Maintenance & Security

The maintenance of the proposed items will be performed by the professionals within the Tech Center in the School of Communications. They are the same professionals who safely store and maintain all of the audio visual equipment for the School. The equipment will also be stored in the Tech Center or in a locked room with the NewsVision Lab studio. This room is accessible only by the Tech Center supervisor and team lead faculty in the Broadcast Journalism concentration. The vehicle(s) will be stationed in the parking area which also occupies vehicles owned by WHUR Radio on the side of the School of Communications. Vehicle maintenance will be covered by manufacturer's warranty.

Camera Equipment & Accessories

The information and pricing below is by Howard University preferred vendor, *B&H Photo, Video & Pro Audio*. The personalized quote is for a professional quality camera and Jennifer Thomas, Dept. of Media, Journalism & Film

necessary accessories suitable for news and documentary recording. Quotes below are for retail pricing. B&H offers significant educational & government discount pricing, which will be utilized. Two cameras are preferred.

Camera & Accessories | \$14,943.65 (per camera)

- Blackmagic Design URSA 4K Digital Cinema Camera (Canon EF Mount) \$5,995.00
- SanDisk 60GB Extreme Pro CFast 2.0 Memory Card \$649.95
- Canon EF 70300mm f/45.6L IS USM Lens \$1,449.00
- Rokinon 35mm T1.5 Cine AS UMC Lens for Canon EF Mount \$459.00
- IndiPRO Tools 12V Power Supply with 4Pin XLR Connection \$85.00
- Blackmagic Design Blackmagic URSA Shoulder Mount Kit \$345.00
- Sennheiser ew 100 ENG G3 Wireless Basic Kit A (516558 MHz) \$977.95
- Digital Juice MiniBurst 256 LED Portable Video Light System \$299.95

Vehicle

The vehicle quotes are from the manufacturers' websites for standard option packages. Both vehicles are similar to those in currently in use by WHUR radio. They are fuel efficient and will allow for up to four passengers.

- 2015 Ford Fiesta S Sedan/Hatch | \$15,595
 - EPA-Estimated Ratings: Automatic 27 city/37 hwy/31 combined
 - Fuel Capacity 12.4
 - Warranty: Powertrain & Roadside Assistance : 5 years / 60,000 miles

Jennifer Thomas, Dept. of Media, Journalism & Film

- Fiat 500 Turbo | \$19,500
 - EPA-Estimated Ratings: 28 city/34 hwy
 - Fuel Capacity 10.5
 - Warranty: Powertrain 50,000-mile Powertrain

Conclusion

As a media professional of 25 years, I reiterate the concept that the media is the most influential enterprise in a democratic society instrumental in the transmission of cultural values. This grant will continue to allow us to continue our tasks as protectors of the public's right to know and shapers of history. It will provide an opportunity for researchers and media professionals to merge our skills for the greater good of our university and global community. Working alongside with WHUT Television, which is broadcast to more than two million viewers, we will continue to enlighten and inform the masses.