



Samantha Tisdal Wright
Journalist, Writer & Editor

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Profile

I am a nationally recognized independent journalist, writer and editor based in southwestern Colorado. My work has won honors for investigative/enterprise reporting, science writing, feature writing and breaking-news reporting, including the Sigma Delta Chi Award for Excellence in Journalism from the Society of Professional Journalists. I also specialize in providing communications and administrative support to community nonprofit organizations.

Work Experience

INDEPENDENT JOURNALIST & FREELANCE WRITER, DEC. 2014-PRESENT

As an independent journalist and freelance writer, I am actively accepting and executing assignments for diverse clients in print and on the web. One of my most recent big projects was a 10-part series about the Idarado Mine in southwestern Colorado, titled "The Mine Next Door," commissioned by Newmont Mining Corporation. I am the editor of the annually published *Official Ouray Ice Park Guide* and I regularly contribute to *Shelter Magazine*, *Telluride Magazine* and the *Mountain Independent*, a nonprofit news site I helped launch in 2014, where I have provided deep-dive coverage of the EPA's Gold King Spill in Silverton, Colo. and other topics. My writing has also been published in *Headwaters Magazine*, *Edible Southwest*, *Real Small Towns*, *Insurance Business America*, the *Durango Herald* and other publications.

SCHEDULING AND COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR, TOP OF THE PINES, INC., 2017-PRESENT

Manage communications and schedule weddings and other events for Top of the Pines, a nonprofit open space preserve in Ouray County, Colo., with diverse responsibilities including publicity, website administration, social media, email maintenance, and misc. other tasks.

COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR/ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT, OURAY COUNTY PERFORMING ARTS GUILD, 2016-2018

Managed communications and organized dozens of performing arts events ranging from chamber music festivals to professional dance performances, with diverse responsibilities including publicity, front-of-house and back-of-house management, event promotion, board communication, keeping meeting minutes, website administration, grant writing, social media, program and flyer design, email maintenance, and myriad other tasks.

REPORTER/PHOTOGRAPHER WITH SIGNIFICANT EDITORIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, THE WATCH NEWSPAPER, TELLURIDE, COLORADO - 2011-2014

As a reporter and photographer at *The Watch*, a regional newspaper based in Telluride, Colo., I covered a broad range of issues in southwestern Colorado. I also wrote award-winning feature articles for *The Watch's* specialty publications, *San Juan Adventure Guide* and *Shelter Magazine*, and took the editorial lead in *The Watch's* production of the official *Ouray Ice Park Guide*. My coverage of a fatal mine accident near Ouray, Colo. in November 2013 won the Sigma Delta Chi Award for Excellence in Journalism in the Breaking News category from the Society of Professional Journalists. My reporting on another accident at the same mine prompted an investigation by the Mine Safety and Health Administration, and won honors in the Society of Professional Journalists' Top of the Rockies Excellence in Journalism Awards.

MANAGING EDITOR/ REPORTER/ PHOTOGRAPHER, OURAY COUNTY PLAINEALER, 1995-2011

I maintained a steady editorial hand at the helm of the *Ouray County Plaindealer*, Ouray County's paper of record, through a challenging transition that included major staff turnover, the merging of two papers into one, and successful implementation of a redesign, all while remaining the paper's senior reporter and primary news generator with significant general assignment duties.

REPORTER/PHOTOGRAPHER, ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR AND SPECIAL PROJECTS EDITOR, OURAY COUNTY PLAINEALER & THE RIDGWAY SUN, 2007-2010

I won over a dozen awards from the Colorado Press Association for my work as a general assignment reporter and photographer at the *Ouray County Plaindealer*, including 1st Place for both Best Feature Story and Best News Story in 2010. In addition to generating vibrant story ideas and executing them independently, I also developed a new Arts and Entertainment section for the papers, bringing a more lively and energetic approach to the A&E beat. I breathed new life into monthly special sections and developed award-winning content and design as the editor and lead writer for the annual *Ouray County Summer Guide* and *Winter Guide* magazines.

INTERIM EDITOR, SILVERTON STANDARD & THE MINER, 2006

Ran a one-woman show at the *Silverton Standard*, putting out the small weekly paper during a five-month transition period.

EDITOR & CONTRIBUTOR, SILVERTON MAGAZINE, 2001-2003

Collaborated with the publisher of *Silverton Magazine* to execute story assignments and assign stories to a stable of freelance writers.

COLUMNIST, MONTROSE MORNING SUN, 1997-1998

Wrote a weekly column on topics ranging from travel to politics to motherhood.

SCIENCE REPORTER, ANTARCTIC SUN TIMES, 1996-1997

Covered a fascinating array of science research topics for a newspaper in McMurdo Station, Antarctica.

ENGLISH TEACHER, QINGDAO UNIVERSITY, PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, 1993-1994

Teacher of English as a Foreign Language; instructed approximately 100 Chinese college students in speaking, reading, and writing the English language. Developed curriculum and lesson plans, delivered weekly lectures on American culture. Saw significant gains in my students' courage to use what they learned, and eagerness to reach new levels of excellence.

DECK HAND, KODIAK, ALASKA, 1993

Worked for a summer as a deck hand on a commercial fishing boat in Kodiak, Alaska.

Awards

- * Sigma Delta Chi Award for Excellence in Journalism, Breaking News, Society of Professional Journalists, 2013.
- * Frequent recipient of Top of the Rockies Excellence in Journalism Awards from the Society of Professional Journalists, including: 2018 – First Place, Multimedia Story and Second Place, A&E and Food; 2017 – First Place, Environment/Enterprise Reporting and Second Place, Business/Enterprise Reporting; 2016 – First Place, Environment/Enterprise Reporting and Health/General Reporting; 2015 – First Place, Sports/General Reporting and Second Place, Investigative/Enterprise Reporting, News Feature and Science/General Reporting.
- * Numerous awards from the Colorado Press Association, including First Place for Best News Story and Best Feature Story.
- * Two-time finalist for the Mark Fischer Poetry Prize, including Honorable Mention in 2012 and 2nd place in 2013.

Education

- * University of Colorado at Boulder – Bachelor of Arts in English/Creative Writing, 1993.
- * Yoga Research and Education Institute, Santa Rosa, Calif. – 500-hour Yoga Teacher Certification, 2003.
- * Ted Scripps Leadership Institute, Society of Professional Journalists, 2016

Key Skills

News writing	Enterprise reporting	Feature writing
Columns	Op Ed pieces	Specialty publications
Photojournalism	Copy editing	Line editing
Lay-out	Page design	Editorial project management
Publicity	Event management	Website maintenance
Brand storytelling	Interviewing	Grant-writing

Technology summary

Windows & Mac OS platforms; Quark; digital photography; Adobe Photoshop (basic); social media (Facebook, Twitter); MS Office suite; WordPress (basic); Weebly website platform (basic); video editing (basic).

Public Service

- * Former Member of Board of Directors for Weehawken Creative Arts, Ouray County Performing Arts Guild & Voyager Youth Program
- * Advisory board member, Top of the Pines
- * Four-year term as a school board member in Silverton, Colo., 1999-2003.

Professional Organizations

- * Member, Society of Professional Journalists
- * Member, Society of Environmental Journalists

Professional References

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