

Cheree Franco

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EDUCATION

Columbia University
Graduate School of Journalism
M.A., arts and culture concentrate

University of Mississippi
B.A., English and psychology

AWARDS

2021 Writing The City grantee
Places Journal, Cravens Foundation &
Columbia University

2016, 2015 specialty winner
2015 entertainment winner
Great Plains Journalism Awards

2016 news feature winner
2014 second place news feature
Arkansas APME awards

2016 features winner
2014 health winner
2014 tourism winner
Arkansas Press Association

2011 Express Tribune fellow
Express Tribune (Karachi, Pakistan)
The International New York Times

BYLINES

VICE, Huck, Juxtapoz, BOMB, Express Tribune, International New York Times, Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Commercial Appeal, Arkansas Times, Brooklyn Rail, Number: Inc, Vinyl Me Please, Jackson Free Press, Clarion Ledger, Portico Jackson, Independent

Upcoming: *Places Journal*

Anthologies

The Best Record Stores in The United States (Vinyl Me Please, 2019)

Visiting Professor of Journalism, Tulane University

August 2022-Current

Designing course curriculum and teaching five sections (100 students); editing 8,000 words of writing per student, per semester.

Freelance Copywriter/Consultant, August 2016-Current

Blogging/writing/editing for ad agencies, including working with Fortune 500 companies. Content and social media strategist, writer and editor for tech start-ups, design firms, restaurants and medical practices. Researcher/document writer for immigration law firms.

Features Writer, *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* Feb. 2013 - Aug. 2016

Reported and photographed for statewide daily, cir. 280,000. Highlights include covering SXSW multiple years, profiling US Senator Tom Cotton and OK Cupid founder Christian Rudder, and **breaking a wrongful conviction**, which helped the Innocence Project secure physical evidence for DNA testing and set a district precedent against a hostile DA; ultimately, this **resulted in the defendant's release** from a life sentence after 22 years.

SKILLS

SEO, AP and Chicago styles, wire services, photography, Photoshop, content/social media management, urban exploration, reporting, interviewing, research, travel

MISCELLANEOUS

Creating copy for corporate and legal clients on an ongoing, independent contractor basis, including working on the accounts of Fortune 500 companies. Covered Standing Rock Dakota Access Pipeline protests from Nov. 2015-Feb. 2016 for *VICE*. Reported in conflict zones in Pakistan and North Dakota. Taught 6wk teen media course through Mississippi Migrant Education Service, Starkville, MS, 2010. Taught Canton Young Filmmakers Workshops, 2007-08. Headed public relations, Crossroads Film Festival, Jackson, MS, 2007. Led Grover Cleveland Jr. High teens in 9wk writing/slam/zine workshops via Harvard Graduate School of Education, Dorchester, MA, 2003. Member of cross-culture collective/individualistic research team, Univ. of MS and Univ. of Hawaii, 2001-02. Studied in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, 1998.

Editor/Reporter, *Arkansas Times*

Nov. 2011 - Feb. 2013

Created and edited web and print content for newsy alt-weekly, including 3,000-word covers. Beats included Capitol, lottery, higher ed, LGBTQ, environment and entertainment. Highlights include covering the mayor/city's efforts to stop a treatment center for unhoused veterans from relocating to a gentrifying neighborhood and breaking the story of environmental damage caused by frac sand mining.

Editing/Reporting Fellow, *Express Tribune*

March 2011 - Sept. 2011

Reported and wrote for a Pakistani daily affiliate of *International New York Times*. Edited web, national and style pages. Mentored Pakistani reporters and led newsroom workshops.

Writer/Content Strategist, Office of Agricultural Communications, Mississippi State University

Sept. 2010 - March 2011 (sabbatical cover)

Wrote and edited press releases, web content, and trade mag articles. Wrote research-based educational material. Created content management strategies for specific projects.

Copywriter/Location Scout, Mississippi Development Authority/Film Office

Jan. 2007- Aug. 2008

Generated copy and photos for tourism materials and film/TV projects. Researched/assisted film projects, including HBO/Sundance doc *Prom Night in Mississippi*. Represented Mississippi Film Office at regional and national conferences and festivals, including Sundance and Slamdance. Organized Crossroads Film Festival year-round events. Facilitated National Black Programming Consortium's New Media Institute in Jackson, Nov. 2007.

Editor, *New Generation Research*,

Aug. 2003 - Aug. 2005

Wrote newsletter articles and copyedited Boston-based investment firm publications. Updated website and managed databases. Created data-heavy weekly news feature. Oversaw monthly publication, from submissions and layout to print. Hired and supervised interns.