

# LESSONS LEARNED IN MUSIC CITY

## A GLANCE INTO MY JOURNEY AT WTVF- NEWSCHANNEL 5 IN NASHVILLE

By: Raichele Privette



If I could describe my overall experience interning at WTVF- NewsChannel 5 in Nashville, Tennessee it would be memorable.

Before being offered the internship I had never considered visiting, let alone living in Nashville, TN. I had no idea what I was getting myself into.

### **Exceeding my expectations**

I had a few goals in mind that I wanted to accomplish within my time here. I wanted to get five stand-ups, finish my reel, and gain a mentor. After my first week alone I had completed three stand-ups. And it was at that moment that I knew I was in for a treat this summer.

My first week at the station was full of excitement. I covered CMA (County Music Association) Week (even though I wasn't familiar with any of the artists) where we attended a Brothers Osborne Concert and interviewed them after the show. A few days later we did a live shot at a Bobby Bones and The Raging Idiots concert on Riverfront Park. During the same week the Predators were competing for the Stanley Cup Final so it was fascinating to see the streets bleeding yellow and blue. Being exposed to such an unfamiliar culture was eye-opening and allowed me to appreciate the different culture.

As the days went on I found myself in shock because I was actually pretty prepared. I had underestimated the knowledge of my professors at Hampton University. The jargon used in the newsroom was familiar for the most part and my writing and editing skills were decent. The biggest challenge I found was adapting to Interplay and AVID Media Composer because I was used to using FinalCutPro.

### **Learning from the experts themselves**

I learned so much about the industry and myself during my time here.

The most important take away I have is that communication is key. In order to survive in this field you must be able to communicate efficiently. Whether I was answering phones at the assignment desk, pitching an idea in the editorial meetings, trying to get MOS (man on the street) interviews, recording a stand-up with the photographers, or simply writing for a producer, I had to know how to engage in the conversations and ask the right questions. Whenever I assisted the reporters and photogs it amazed me how they knew so many people. They always stressed the importance of building relationships and being sure to never burn bridges in your community.

Another important lesson that I learned was that you must be flexible and always prepared for the unexpected. Because "we" as journalists are committed to delivering news we must remember that anything can happen at any moment. There were several incidents (especially when I was working night-side) where I went out with a reporter who was assigned to one story but because there was breaking news we had to leave our current scene to go somewhere else while being on a time crunch. I observed that majority of the time the reporters are unaware of what their day will consist of. I learned very quickly to always have a pair of comfortable shoes, an umbrella and a few snacks with you.

### **Becoming the newest edition to the family**

The newsroom staff welcomed me with open arms. They constantly reminded me that "No question was a dumb question." They challenged me to go above and beyond to reach my fullest potential. Not only was I able to sit in on the editorial meetings every morning but they encouraged me to pitch story ideas too. They let me write scripts using iNews for the newscasts and the web. I controlled the teleprompter during some shows. I also created my own packages on AVID using some of the content provided. I loved how they were all extremely patient with me whenever I needed help.

It took me a while to get out of my comfort zone especially when it came to interacting with the general manager and news directors (because they came off intimidating) but once I got over my fear, I found them to be actually very friendly. Before I knew it I was asking them to read over my scripts, if I could write scripts, and simply for advice.

I can honestly say that my time spent in Music City has been one for the books. Every day was an adventure. I plan to take everything that I learned back to Hampton University as I finish my senior year.