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**Department of
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And Journalism**

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Prof. James Wilson

The son of a newspaper editor/publisher, Professor Emeritus James “Jim” Wilson had a knack for news, but it wasn’t the newspaper that reeled him in into the news industry. Wilson would work and teach for nearly 50 years in radio and TV broadcast, until his retirement from Fresno State in December of 2009.

A Turlock native, Wilson enrolled at the then-Fresno State College out of high school and received his B.A. in Radio and TV Broadcast with a minor in journalism in 1961. Wilson credits his first job in radio to fellow Professor Emeritus Bernard Shepard. Shepard helped Wilson receive his first job in radio as a news reporter for the radio station KYNO.

During Wilson’s senior year at Fresno State, he worked part time at KMJ radio as a student intern. Unfortunately KMJ was unable to hire Wilson for a fulltime position at the time, so he enlisted in the Army and served for three years. By enlisting in the military, Wilson was able to select his own training, where as if he were drafted, he would have more than likely been an infantryman.

In the Army, Wilson attended the Defense Information School in Fort Slocum, N.Y. where he studied radio and TV broadcast. Wilson excelled in his studies so much that he was selected to stay at DINFOS as an instructor, where he taught military personnel in radio and TV broadcasting. After his service, Wilson returned back to California where he worked in the Bay Area for a year. During that year, he worked at three different radio stations in Napa, Petaluma and San Rafael before returning to Fresno.

In Fresno, Wilson reconnected with KMJ as a news reporter and after a year was named the station’s news director. Wilson remembers that as his most enjoyable position in broadcast. After serving four years as news director, Wilson was promoted to program director and held that post for 9 years. In 1979, Wilson was appointed vice president and general manager for KMJ radio until he left in 1983.

During his time as program director, Wilson came across an ad in the newspaper about receiving a Master’s degree at California State University, Fresno. Wilson began taking night classes while still working at KMJ and received his Master’s shortly after.

Wilson's first teaching job was at Merced College where he taught radio broadcast one night a week. It was with that experience, that Wilson found his passion to teach. In 1975, Fresno State hired Wilson part time to look over the KFSR radio station and began teaching journalism and broadcast classes shortly there after. Wilson, who was frustrated with his position at KMJ at the time, left KMJ in 1983 to be hired on full time by Fresno State as a professor.

During his time at Fresno State, Wilson was one of four people who merged the Telecommunications Department with the Journalism Department into what is now known as the Mass Communication and Journalism Department.

Among other accomplishments, Wilson earned the California Associated Press Radio Association's, Best News Documentary award in 1973 for his documentary on the 10th anniversary of President Kennedy's assassination. He also received Billboard Magazine's Best Documentary award for his piece on Edward Murrow in 1976 along with numerous awards.

Wilson was given the Golden Grad Award from Fresno State as a part of their centennial celebration. The award honored him in for being a part of the 1961 graduating class from Fresno State, the university's 50th graduating class in school history.

Wilson admits that his passion for teaching at Fresno State added 10 years to his life and now resides quietly in Clovis where he enjoys following the San Francisco 49ers and Giants.