

Tracy Correa
Journalism
Class of 1989



By: Erica Bermudez

From the moment Tracy Correa won a sixth grade essay contest at Winchell Elementary School, she knew that she wanted to pursue a career in writing. Fast forward 10 years, and Correa began living her dream.

After graduating from the mass communication and journalism department at Fresno State in 1989, Correa worked at several newspapers in central and southern California before accepting a position at The Fresno Bee, where she worked for more than 15 years.

During her time at Fresno State, Correa was involved in many writing opportunities, including being the news editor at The Daily Collegian, which at the time was completely student-run. She wrote for Insight, which was a weekly newspaper that was run by the MCJ department, and she also wrote part-time for The Fresno Bee.

Correa said that the main reason she loved the MCJ program at Fresno State is because she enjoyed being able to write and express herself. She loved the fact that The Daily Collegian was student-run back then because it meant that students had complete authority over what they published.

Correa's favorite professor at Fresno State was Jim Tucker, who was the former MCJ department chair and always called Correa a "prolific writer" because she was always involved in some sort of writing project.

Correa's favorite type of stories to write are investigative ones. During Correa's time at The Fresno Bee, she obtained a national award for an investigative piece about gastric bypass surgeries in Fresno. This is one of the stories she's most proud of.

Correa, who had breast cancer, also places a story that chronicled her treatment with the cancer on that list.

When it comes to giving advice to future journalists, Correa believes that it's important to double-check all of the facts of a story so that one doesn't publish false information. Correa also stated it's important for future journalists to know that no newspaper is too small.

"You have to start somewhere, and any job you get is going to be experience for the next job opportunity you come across," Correa said.

Correa also stated that although there is a lot of competition now that the newspaper industry is smaller, companies are more willing to hire younger, Internet-savvy people who are good writers and communicators.

"Good writing skills and good communication skills are key to any job," she said.

Correa stopped working at The Fresno Bee in 2011 after the economy took a tumble and changed many aspects of the newspaper industry. The poor economy led to a decrease in advertising revenue, which led to a lot of downsizing and general changes to the business she had worked in for so many years.

"It wasn't the newspaper industry I once loved," Correa said. "So I didn't think I wanted to stick around."

When PG&E decided to add a news website within its corporate communications department, Correa applied and was one of the first people to be hired. Correa still works for the department, and now does PR-related writing, video production and edits the company's employee newsletter. Correa said she is happy that working in the newspaper industry gave her a great career foundation.