

JayMac

Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication Alumni Association

GAYLORD ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



“The OU school of journalism...provided the foundation and opportunity for me to have a multifaceted career. I have truly been blessed.”

STORMY WASHINGTON

Executive Assistant to the VP for Social Responsibility,
Orlando Magic
Orlando, FL

Do you believe in Magic? Stormy Washington does. As the Executive Assistant to the Vice President of Social Responsibility at the Orlando Magic, Stormy has a hands-on role in strengthening bonds between the NBA team and its community. We talked to Stormy, a 1990 journalism graduate, about her career and her OU experience.

What is your favorite memory from your time in the journalism program at OU?

I have many fond memories of my time in the journalism program at the University of Oklahoma. However, three of my favorites are the audio production course, the TV program we produced called “Sooner Update,” and being the first Miss Black OU to become Miss Black Oklahoma (1988). The training, public relations and public speaking skills acquired in my studies more than prepared me for the interview and projection categories of the competitions.

What do you consider to be the most significant moments of your career so far?

- My first job after graduation was in the OU Athletic Department as the manager of the student employees. Subsequent to this position, I was promoted to Assistant Sports Information Director (ASID). I will forever be grateful to John Walker III and Mike Treps for the opportunities. That was an exciting time. As an ASID, I traveled with the women’s basketball team and provided stats and game recaps to local media. I typed the play-by-play for the football games (yes, on a typewriter). I also produced media guides for women’s basketball and men’s & women’s track & field.
- The next moment would be my time spent with the Center for Drug-Free Living in the roles of marketing

Did you have a favorite faculty/staff member in the journalism program?

I adored all of my professors in the program. I found them to be very dedicated academicians, always accessible, and completely thorough in their teaching. The curriculum was spot on. I was part of a team that created real radio commercials, TV shows, and press kits. The untiring efforts of my professors resulted in me being well prepared for a successful career in public relations.

Describe your role at the Orlando Magic.

I am the executive assistant to the Vice President of Social Responsibility. Our department encompasses Community Relations, Government Affairs, Multicultural Insights and the Orlando Magic Youth Foundation (OMYF). I enjoy working for the Orlando Magic and particularly in the Social Responsibility Department. I communicate and interact with every department within the company, as well as fans, players, coaches, community leaders, and government and elected officials. I take great pride in working for an organization that makes a significant impact in our community.

How did your career path lead you to the Magic?

That's an interesting story. I attended a fine arts education high school - Cleveland Innovative High School. I literally did not like sports until I attended OU. I developed my love of sports my freshman year at OU when we won the national championship in football (1985). I was bitten by the sports bug and the rest is history. While at OU, I worked in the athletic ticket office as a student employee, then as a manager, and finally as an assistant director of Sports Information. When I relocated to Orlando, Florida in 1993. I aspired to work for the Orlando Magic in the Community Relations Department. I was impressed by the organization's commitment of being a good corporate partner to the citizens of the Orlando community. Fast forward to 2010: There was an opening at the Orlando Magic in the Community Relations Department (now Social Responsibility), so after working for Walt Disney World as a

specialist, development coordinator (grant writer), and special projects coordinator where I served in a PR capacity promoting various initiatives for the organization.

- Being selected to serve on the launch committee for Sports and Entertainment for the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Orlando Chapter.
- The day I got hired to work for the Orlando Magic.

The OU school of journalism (Radio/TV/Film), provided the foundation and opportunity for me to have a multifaceted career. I have truly been blessed. I have done voice-over work for profit and non-profit organizations and served in a variety of interesting roles. I can't wait to see what's next.

What advice would you give to current students aspiring to a career in public relations?

Don't take your degree for granted. Explore all of your options. There is so much you can do with a degree in journalism. What other degree can you obtain where you can be an assistant sports information director, grant writer, marketing specialist, special projects coordinator, communication specialists, program director, volunteer services/community relations manager and a publicity manager?

What do you do for fun outside of work?

Spend time with my husband (Herb) and family attending Orlando Magic games, watching movies, volunteering, and performing in community theater. I was also named director of communications for my church recently (Agape Perfecting Praise & Worship Center).

communications specialists and public relations manager for Disney Sports Attractions I applied for and received the position with the Orlando Magic.



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