

Baseball, music help journalist make career decisions

Creed fan impresses with heavy involvement

Maria Hechanova

The Student Press

The binoculars trained on 16-year-old Sara Zeck's future have never been focused like this before.

The Walter Cronkite School of Journalism Summer Journalism Institute has helped clear the haze for the aspiring journalist. Zeck describes herself as "dedicated" and believes that having this quality will help her achieve her dreams.



Sara Zeck

"I've always been writing. My hand has never stopped moving," she said.

Zeck attends Seton Catholic High School in Chandler and will be a junior this fall. Last year she was a staff reporter and the entertainment editor for her high school's newspaper, *The Sentinel*. This fall she will remain the entertainment editor but will also take on the job as co-editor in chief. Her editor, Sean McCarthy, spoke very highly of Sara's work ethic.

"The last issue was put together solely by me and her (Sara)," McCarthy said with a bit of bitterness in his voice. "When no one else seemed motivated to work, she was always there. She did more than her share of work. I could give her any article and she would have no problem doing it last minute. Even though she wasn't one of the editors, she put in more work than anyone else.

In terms of effort, she gets an A-plus."

Zeck is undecided about where she wants to go to college, but knows that she wants to major in journalism and minor in public relations.

During and out of college, she sees herself working at a local radio station, having a job at a small paper and somehow being involved with the music industry.

Her love for music and passion for writing all ties into her perfect dream job - working with *Rolling Stone* or Windup Records. When asked whether she'll ever pursue composing, she explained the type of writing isn't the same, and it's just not her style.

"I don't really like to write poetry," she said. "I like to write more hard core opinionated stuff."

Zeck's taste of music turned "98 Degrees" in the sixth grade - literally. Boy bands like 98 Degrees, Backstreet Boys and N'SYNC are just childhood memories now. Thanks to hearing the new type of music at an Arizona Diamondbacks game, she went from teeny bopper to hard-rocker in one day.

Now, she's a big-time Creed fan. She spent about \$300 on their concert last December. The band has inspired her to learn how to play the guitar and has helped her relax when things get tough.

"Their lyrics are very encouraging and they're just incredible," she added.

Baseball, along with music, has helped influence Zeck's career decisions. In sixth grade, she wrote an article about Travis Lee. At the end of season, she received a thank you letter from Lee that said she had talent. He added she should send her story to a

local paper. Lee's letter is where Zeck got her confidence to pursue journalism and showcase her talent in writing.

According to Zeck's mom, Susan, some descriptors of her daughter include being organized, independent, determined, strong-willed and opinionated.

"She has high expectations for herself and others," said Susan.

Her attitude was proven at the Summer Journalism Institute when she checked her grades on the Web. One of her teachers didn't give her credit for two assignments that she said she worked very hard on and personally turned into him.

Soon-to-be senior Sharon Heigh, a Summer Institute member from Desert Mountain, was there when Zeck received her e-mail.

"She was shocked because it's so uncharacteristic of her personality to miss assignments like that, and she immediately took action to fixing the situation," Heigh said.

The situation ended up being a mistake on her teacher's part, so he apologized and gave her full credit on the assignments.

Zeck is involved in National Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society, performs volunteer work and babysits. She has a GPA of 3.6 and takes honors and AP classes.

Zeck's family consists of Susan, Gary (dad), and Kevin (brother). She likes to spend quality time with them and for the most part gets along with Kevin.

"I like (being the oldest sibling), because it's a lot of responsibility, and it teaches you to care for others," Zeck said. "My brother gets to do stuff earlier than I did, but it's not a bad thing. It's just a learning experience. You're just going to have to deal with it."

Mother/daughter bonding activities consist of shopping at Target and watching *Smallville* while father/daughter activities include baseball games. Zeck's favorite baseball teams include the Diamondbacks, the Tampa Bay Devil Rays, the Cleveland Indians, and the Philadelphia Phillies.

Along with family, religion is important to Zeck. As a member of the Catholic church, scandals and rumors about her religion have been following her around like a dark cloud, she said.

"I'm kinda disappointed," Zeck said. "It's our source of support. The church is our comfort and shelter, and seeing it crumble is discouraging sometimes."

A lot of commitment and sacrifice have taken place to ensure Zeck stays on the right track. Susan works as a psych nurse and Gary works for UMOM, a program dedicated to helping less fortunate families get back on their feet. Both parents work very hard to ensure that there is enough money for Zeck to keep attending Seton, a private Catholic school.

Music, writing, baseball pants and binoculars. These are four things that have helped Zeck shape her destiny, or at least make it a little bit clearer.

"I've always been writing. My hand has never stopped."

Student finds passions in journalism, sports

Sotelo credits success to supportive family

Mike Linsey

The Student Press

The sun-scorched wind whips in sporadic intensity across his face, the perspiration streams down his cheeks and onto the track as he circles in an effort to attain a five-minute mile at the Scottsdale Junior Varsity City Championship. Making a final turn, he bolts down the main straightaway at breakneck speed. Desert Mountain High School junior Matt Sotelo has completed the grueling task of running the mile in 5 minutes, 12 seconds.



Matt Sotelo

"Track and field keeps me in great athletic shape," said Sotelo, a Valley native. "A sport like this fosters discipline in everything you do, and it teaches you about life as well."

Competitive running has taught Sotelo a multitude of motivational aspects that aid

him in daily life, including the realization that nothing gratifying results from life without a little bit of elbow grease, he said.

As a student newspaper reporter at the *Desert Mountain Wolf's Print*, Sotelo hones his skills on news and sports writing. However, he has developed a tendency to engage in slanted writing, and he admits suffering from an occasional propensity to report subjectively in objective assignments.

Sotelo wants to enter a university with a "reputable journalism program," in which he can build upon his editorial talent.

"I'd probably make a better columnist, so that's what I'd really like to do as a print journalist," Sotelo said. "I like expressing my opinion and I want people to think like I do."

Sotelo wrote two columns last year, one of which he is particularly proud. He recalls writing about a club that strove to foster political correctness by discouraging students to cheer for teams with offensive or culturally intolerant mascots, such as the Cleveland Indians.

"It was a lot of fun to counter that club's actions, he said. I tried to show that

if the Cleveland Indians title offends Native Americans, does that mean the ASU Sun Devils mascot offends me because I'm Catholic? I thought it was a pretty stupid way to show political correctness by bashing team mascots."

Sharon Heigh, Matt's counterpart on the *Wolf's Print*, said "Matt is a very hard worker. He always finds a unique angle in a story."

For all his athletic and intellectual abilities, Sotelo credits his focused life to a supportive family, with his parents as the center point of his development.

"They set good examples that steer me in the right direction," he said.

In turn, Sotelo likes to think his 12-year-old brother and 10-year-old sister respect him in a similar fashion when he attends their sporting events. Sotelo also takes pride in his academic strides as a National Honor Society member.

His enrollment next year encompasses a slew of honors and advanced placement courses, including honors human physiology and anatomy, AP calculus and AP government. Prior courses include honors

Spanish IV and honors English.

"I'm a big fan of literature because it helps you identify with the concerns of the time period in history," Sotelo said. "I once heard from someone that 'history tells you how it happened; literature tells you how it felt.'"

Sotelo hopes his impressive scholastic and journalistic résumé will land him in prominent athletic and journalistic institutions such as ASU, UA or Northwestern. Although he doesn't consider himself a premier college athlete, he's hopeful there will be a promising chance for him to earn a spot on the cross-country squad, and an outside chance to become a member of the track and field network when he joins the varsity teams this upcoming year.

"I'm not the best athlete, but I'm pretty sure I'll be on varsity cross country and track and field," Sotelo said. "That might help me in college."

He added that should anyone encounter adversity, to remember the wise rallying cry of Notre Dame football head coach Lou Holtz:

"The best part of getting knocked down is getting back up."

Calkins overcomes odds

Disease can't hold back teen

Ashley Morris

The Student Press

Living with a disease gives Jessi Calkins "a new perspective on life," which helps her with her writing.

Her smile can light up any room. Her charismatic eyes convey her courage. She lives with the chronic illness Crohns disease. With treatment, she is able to suppress it, but there is currently no cure.

Jessi Calkins is 17 years old and attends Pinnacle High School. Although absent from school because of the illness, she manages to persevere and stay involved in extracurricular activities.

She has been a member of the student council for five years. Calkins is also active in cheer, dance, theater and newspaper.

"I've been a dancer since I was 3 and dance to everything imaginable," she said.

Calkins adds, "Theater and dance have been my lifelong passion. But journalism has become my new passion. I love writing, interviewing and learning new

facts."

Calkins was born in Arizona, then moved to Washington, D.C., in eighth grade. Last year she moved back to Arizona.

"D.C. is a melting pot. I learned to accept new people," Calkins said.

Despite her frequent absence from school, Calkins works hard to "stay involved." She strives to have the best experience of high school possible.

With a love for theater and writing, Calkins plans to attend the Walter Cronkite



Jessi Calkins

School of Journalism at Arizona State University, major in journalism, and have a double minor in theater. After college, Calkins plans to become a theater critic or a broadcasting reporter.

Her courage guides her through the medical obstacles in her life and helps her keep an optimistic view of the future. "I missed out on a lot of high school, but college will be an opportunity to start over," Calkins said.

Aspiring journalist volunteers, swims, boxes her way to the top

Morris enjoys horror movies, relaxing dinners

Reed Scharff

The Student Press

As the current features and entertainment editor at Bourgade High School's newspaper, Morris is also involved in a variety of extra-curricular activities.

Morris is very immersed in volunteer

Ashley Morris, a 17-year-old high school student, shows a strong interest in pursuing a career in journalism.

activities that help to further enhance her community. She is an active member of SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions.)

"I volunteer Fridays after school at Sun Garden Rest Home, where I read to the elderly and talk with them," said Morris.

Morris is also an incredibly talented swimmer.

"I used to swim competitively, but now I just swim for fun," said Morris.

She is a lifeguard at Waterworld. She has had extensive training in lifeguard skills,

CPR, and first aid.



Ashley Morris

In her spare time, Morris is a boxer.

"Boxing for me," said Morris, "is a release from daily stress."

As far as journalism goes, Morris "plans to major in journalism or possibly broadcasting." Morris was also accepted to a journalism institute over the summer at the Walter Cronkite School for Journalism.

"For college, I've been thinking about

ASU or Grand Canyon University," she said.

Outside of school, Morris goes to horror movies and enjoys relaxing dinners at PF Chang's.

"I enjoy going out and having a good time with my friends," Morris said.

Allyssa Rojo is just one of the friends Morris has made at the Cronkite Institute. It is extremely rare to see one of them without the other close behind.

"Ashley is smart and fun," Rojo said. "She is definitely cool and is a lot of fun to talk to."