

## Ability to adapt has become important for journalism interns



**BY LEE STEPHENS**

Within the first five months of this year, industry observers have seen the highest rate of attrition of journalism jobs since 2009. According to a recent Bloomberg article, 3,000 people have been laid off or offered buyouts, which have been widespread through traditional and digital media giants like Gannett, McClatchy, CNN, and BuzzFeed.

It's no surprise, as the field has endured significant changes in just the last decade. However, local organizations like South Florida PBS (SFPBS) are stepping up to make a change.

"Our internship programs go hand-in-hand with the curriculum being offered at universities. We have partnerships with Florida International University, Nova Southeastern University, University of Miami, and many more to ensure what we're teaching them is an extension of the classroom," said Charlotte Cushing, multimedia producer at South Florida PBS.

"The industry that our future communicators are entering is not the same industry we had the luxury of entering."

The local public broadcasting station is determined to prepare the next generation of communicators to tackle the ever-changing and competitive industry through its programs, partnerships and community. They are providing students real-world experience, training them to think outside of the box and continue with their motto of lifelong learning in order to adapt. Students can meet and learn from professionals in

the field and develop a network of contacts through the different opportunities offered.

"Just as the public school systems in South Florida look to deliver the highest quality education possible for its students as well as our communities, we too seek to instill an adaptability and pursuit of lifelong learning in the youth whose talent we foster," said Dolores Sukhdeo, president & CEO of South Florida PBS.

The SFPBS Internship Program works toward empowering students to be successful and confident by understanding their skills and interests: From production to programming and even a division geared toward students with autism.

One intern, Carolyn Batchelor, had the opportunity to combine her passion for flying and journalism by helping to develop a new series of interstitials called *The Destination: Aviation*, which gives young aviators the chance to describe the thrill of flight and to comment on the topic: "Why I Fly." Batchelor is now in the process of earning her pilot's license.

"It was so exciting to be a part of the creative process and I'm honored to be the third generation involved with South Florida PBS. My grandfather always was a big supporter of the public station," said Carolyn Batchelor, former intern at South Florida PBS. "I can't wait to see the aviation series come to life. I have learned so much."

Since 2014, SFPBS has provided 47 interns with the tools for a successful career in journalism. The internship program is determined to shape the future of the industry in a positive way.