

Daily Titan

Spanish media market professionals see bright future

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Communication students and professionals gathered to speak about new opportunities for bilingual journalists at the second annual Orange County Spanish Journalism Conference Friday.

The event, which took place in the Portola Pavilion of Cal State Fullerton's Titan Student Union, was organized by the Society of Professional Journalism in collaboration with Iris Preciado from CSUF Public Affairs, as well as members of Casa Guanajuato and Yanga Veracruz Foundation.

State Sen. Lou Correa, D-Santa Ana, participated in the opening ceremony. The conference was conducted in Spanish and focused on multicultural journalism.

According to Telemundo Reporter Martin Plascencia, bilingual journalists are in demand and have a responsibility to inform the Hispanic market on issues concerning immigration, education and consumer information. Plascencia encourages students to improve their Spanish writing skills by reading novels written by Carlos Fuentes or watching cultural programs on Spanish language TV. He also recommends students gain experience in local or small town stations prior to applying for Telemundo or Univision, the two largest Spanish language TV networks in the nation.

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The presenters showed an array of opportunities for the bilingual journalist in the Spanish language market. Lilian de la Torre-Jimenez, editor and owner of Bodas USA magazine, said that changes in demographics and technology are opening new doors for the bilingual students. Latina magazine and Hispanic Business magazine are English-language publications that cater to the bilingual generation and the Hispanic community.

"I'm seeing a drastic change, of course, in demographics, but in the Hispanic media. There are many bilingual publications that are opening up; newspapers, magazines, bilingual radio," Torre-Jimenez said. "There are opportunities for journalists that are bilingual. Not only in Spanish publications, but in English publications that cater to the Hispanics."

Patricia Garcia, director of advertisement agency Power Media Group, said that the buying power of Hispanics in California has been on the rise since 1990. It is currently at \$244 billion and is expected to increase to \$322 billion by 2012, according to data provided by the Selig Center For Economic Growth. According to Garcia, the bilingual student not only can seek jobs in print or broadcast news, but in other fields like the marketing sector.

Garcia graduated in public relations and funded Power Media Group, Inc. from her family room. Garcia received the LBA Sol Award for Business of the Year in 2008 and has also received several government recognitions throughout the years.

America Arias, president of the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) at CSUF, is concerned that the younger generation is losing its language. She helped organized the conference as a way to give back to the students and to prepare them for the promising future.

"It is great that the population is growing, but if we are losing our pride and we are losing our language, we are losing our identity," Arias said. "This is how powerful Spanish media really is. This is how powerful you can be if you reach out and inform the public, and I think if we bring that back to the youth, to our own students here at Fullerton, I feel like I'm contributing to making sure that the next generation, the next big boom, is well informed to inform the public."

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