

Ramapo Alumna Maria Marino is Camera Ready for NY Sports Fans

Maria Marino is becoming a familiar face on sports television in the New York area. The Hamburg, N.J., native is an on-air sports reporter and host for SNY-TV (I will link here: <https://sny.tv/talent>), the broadcast home of the New York Mets, as well as professional football, basketball and hockey teams, and other sports. She regularly anchors SportsNite, hosts Place Your Bets on NFL Sundays, and reports on UConn women's basketball.

Marino earned her B.A. in Communications with a journalism concentration and Spanish minor from Ramapo College in 2011. She has always been a strong writer, she says, but her interviewing skills, love of the game, and confidence in front of a camera has helped propel her career in the exciting world of sports television. She took time out of her busy schedule to chat with us.

Congratulations on your success. What is it like to be an on-air talent for SNY?

Getting booked on SNY for the first time was life-changing. It enhanced my credibility and put me in more situations to work and learn alongside some of the best in sports media. I have been able to maximize my versatility in terms of skill and subject matter by hosting shows, participating on opinion panels, anchoring, and reporting in the field. Being a native of the greater NYC area, discussing the local teams feels even more special. I am also a huge fan of women's sports, so covering UConn women's basketball is a privilege.

You were a newspaper reporter previously. How is writing for and doing televised reporting different than preparing for print journalism?

Writing is the foundation of everything in media, so I am grateful I gained an understanding and ability in that area. However, I am very much a 'people person' who especially enjoys interaction and public speaking, so broadcasting seemed the natural fit. There is something about the writing process that I find incredible because it doesn't have the fleeting nature of television. Reporting and researching skills are needed for both formats and both have their unique challenges. Broadcasting is more of a performance that requires energy and execution in the moment, while writing is often much more thorough and takes longer to come together. I have immense respect for the writers in my industry, but I think I have found my place connecting with an audience through broadcasting.

You undoubtedly have met some big sports stars. Does anyone stand out?

Recently I was able to interview four-time WNBA champion Sue Bird for a series of segments I'm hosting on SNY called '*She Got Game*.' I get to speak a lot with her former coach at UConn, the 11-time national champion Geno Auriemma. He is always a fantastic interview and infectious personality. Some others that stand out are the football Giants' Saquon Barkley; all-time Yankee great Mariano Rivera; members of the U.S. women's national soccer team after their World Cup win in 2019; NBA players including Ben Simmons, Jayson Tatum and Trae Young; and Olympic beach volleyball medalists Kerri Walsh-Jennings and April Ross.

How has sports betting, analytics and incredible data affected sports reporting these days?

Legalized sports betting has had a major impact on sports media and related storylines have infiltrated just about every form of content. The boom and demand have put sports betting companies in position to become some of the most prevalent sponsors of sports programming. Whether you like to place bets or not, the trends and data can offer different ways of breaking down the topics and entertaining viewers. Analytics have also become more commonplace among sports teams for both in-game and personnel management. Increased advanced statistics and viewership data have helped improve and justify a more comprehensive coverage of women's sports, as well.

Have you always been interested in reporting? Did you write about anything other than sports?

I became interested in reporting as a high school student. I was always a strong writer. My sophomore English teacher also taught a journalism course, so when I had to pick an elective for my junior year, journalism made sense. I fell in love with the craft then, and became an editor for my school newspaper when I was a senior. I wrote about all kinds of topics, but definitely saw a need for sports coverage and gravitated to those stories.

You also covered high school sports for a local newspaper. Did you have a favorite sport to cover and write about?

Working part-time for a semester at the New Jersey Herald [Sussex County, N.J.] is an experience I look back on fondly. It was my first time writing on deadline and seeing my bylines in print for a professional publication. I gained valuable interviewing skills and streamlined my storytelling with the help of the editor there. My favorite high school sport to cover was volleyball. It was just starting to emerge onto the scene in Sussex County, and I was passionate about showcasing a sport that I never had an opportunity to play at the high school level.

Where would you like to take your career from here?

It's difficult to say specifically where I see my career going from here as I'm open to many things. In terms of content, I know my favorite sport to cover is basketball. I've found a passion and purpose when it comes to promoting and providing equal, nuanced coverage to women's basketball and women's sports in general. Also, I always had a dream to report on Olympic beach volleyball, which I haven't ruled out. It would be ideal to have more editorial control over whatever platform I'm occupying. I would like to take steps that allow me the option to ascend into a decision-making role within the media business.

Why did you choose to attend Ramapo?

I started my college education at Sussex County Community College on a scholarship through the NJ STARS program, which allowed me to earn an Associate's Degree at no cost, then transfer to a four-year state college at a significant discount. I looked at a few other state colleges that offered the major I needed, but it was the small-town feel of the Ramapo campus and community that drew me in. It reminded me a lot of SCCC, picturesque and welcoming.

What advice can you offer for Ramapo students who wish to pursue a career in sports journalism?

My advice is to be prepared that your career path may be unclear. I had a number of radio jobs, which actually helped me transition into television. The first one was for local station WGHT where I covered hyperlocal news as a reporter and anchor. That provided me with enough experience to land an interview with SiriusXM, which is how I broke into sports. From there I was able to network and other opportunities opened up, such as anchoring for NBC Sports Radio, and then eventually working for a network called FNTSY, where I got in front of the camera daily before getting hired exclusively by SNY.

I would tell students to have patience. Get creative. Network by making positive impressions and forming mutually beneficial relationships. Most importantly, work hard to improve your skills so when an opportunity does arise, you can handle it. Also, stay 'in the know' regarding the industry as well as the sports you cover by making research part of your daily routine.