

Alumna Dorine Bethea has all the ‘write stuff’ – from the Ramapo News to The Washington Post

MAHWAH, N.J. -- Ramapo College alumna Dorine Bethea '86 knew as a young girl that she wanted to be a journalist. "I was fascinated with the news and I loved watching reporters like Barbara Walters on television," said Bethea, a Jersey City, N.J., native. "That's what I wanted to do, write about what was happening in the world."

Bethea, who recently spoke at the College, has accomplished her goal. She is a multiplatform editor – a copy editor for digital and print stories -- in the Washington, D.C., bureau of one of the world's most renowned newspapers, *The Washington Post*. Her quest to get there had humble beginnings.

She received an EOF (Educational Opportunity Fund) scholarship to attend Ramapo College and majored in journalism in the School of Contemporary Arts. Right away she sought out a position at *The Ramapo News*, starting out as a reporter and eventually becoming the editor-in-chief in the spring semester of her senior year. After graduation, Bethea took a job at a local book publishing company but knew that wasn't what she wanted to do.

"My first love was journalism, so I began looking for jobs at local papers," Bethea said. She got a position as a part-time obituary writer for *The Bergen Record* (now *northjersey.com*), and went on to work for a variety of newspapers in New Jersey and several states across the country as a reporter and as an assignment editor on the metro desk. Along the way, she also landed a teaching position at the University of Missouri's school of journalism and remained there for two years. "I liked helping young students see the big picture for a story and answer their questions," Bethea said.

In 2016, Bethea was about to begin a graduate degree program in international politics when a friend suggested she apply for a position at *The Washington Post*. She's been there for six years. "Sometimes I miss being in the field as a reporter but I have an opportunity to shape stories and develop ideas. It can be quite challenging, though. I work on the universal desk so I see a wide variety of stories – cybersecurity, what's happening in Ukraine, national and political news," she said. "But I enjoy it. At *The Washington Post*, I am in the playground with the

greats, reporters and editors who have been with the paper their whole careers. I can measure how good the reporters and editors are here. Their technical skills and knowledge, their curiosity and sources, and the accuracy of their work...all incredible. Sometimes, I can't believe I'm actually here."

Bethea attributes a lot of her success to her experience at Ramapo. "I loved every minute being at the college. I was an athlete on the basketball team and enjoyed what was happening in the Student Center," she said. "But most of all, people along the way encouraged me to pursue this career. They must have seen something that I didn't see in myself."

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