

Alumni Join ProPublica



ProPublica, a nonprofit public interest journalism newsroom, continues to build its staff of investigative reporters. After receiving hundreds of applications, five new staffers were hired; two of them, Eric Umansky M.A. '07 and Abrahm Lustgarten '03, are alumni.

Umansky wrote Slate's "Today's Papers" feature from 2001 through 2006. He then received a Gordon Grey fellowship from the Journalism School through which he studied Arabic in Syria: I'm a senior writer for ProPublica, a new nonprofit investigative newsroom headed by Paul Steiger, the former top editor of the Wall Street Journal. We are going to have about 20 reporters on staff, all digging up stories on abuses of power. Our investigations are going to be published by news outlets — print or broadcast — that we partner with on stories. While many of ProPublica's stories will be in-depth investigative pieces, we are also going to be publishing daily follow-ups on our site. That's where my job fits in: I am going to be writing for and helping quarterback our Web site.

Abrahm Lustgarten is a former staff writer and contributor for *Fortune*, and has written for *Salon*, *Esquire*, the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times*. He is the author of a recent book, "China's Great Train: Beijing's Drive West and the Campaign to Remake Tibet," a project that was funded in part by a grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation: I recently accepted a position as a reporter with ProPublica, where I will focus on global development and environmental issues. Since graduat-

JOHN MIKYTUCK '08



John Mikytuck won a 2008 Emmy Award for his WebTV show "Reporting AIDS." It was recognized in the new category of "Advanced Media," anything made for viewing on a computer or mobile device. Mikytuck is the writer, producer and host of the show, which is carried on ScribeMedia.org. A graduate of Cornell University, Mikytuck has been a producer for the History Channel, A&E Television and the Biography Channel.

A series like "Reporting AIDS" that focuses on important issues in the global AIDS epidemic wouldn't be produced by network or cable TV, but the Web has created the opportunity to tell important stories most media outlets won't or can't cover. As more and more newsrooms shrink, small groups of journalists producing stories on the Web may be the only way important news gets covered. And the Web can be watched by people around the globe. I am hopeful that winning the Emmy will help lead to the successful completion of my next project, the story of the resurgence of HIV in the gay community, which I have been working on in Professor Sam Freedman's book writing class. It is a story I've wanted to tell since before arriving at J-School as an older student and a midcareer professional. And now I feel I've got the skills to do it.

AILSAL CHANG '08



Ailsa Chang, selected as one of three Joan Kroc NPR fellows for the coming year, will get rigorous, hands-on training in every aspect of public radio journalism at National Public Radio's headquarters in Washington, D.C. Chang received her bachelor's degree in public policy from Stanford University, her J.D. from Stanford Law School and a master's in media law from Oxford University, where she was a Fulbright Scholar. She was a litigator at a San Francisco law firm and a former law clerk on the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals before transitioning into journalism via an internship at KQED public radio in San Francisco.

The career transition was really scary at first, but I'm happier professionally than I've ever been in my life. I'm not locked up in a law office staring down at boxes and boxes of documents anymore. I'm outside talking to people, gathering sound, figuring out what's relevant and interesting to most people — that's a world away from what I did as a litigator. I thought the last thing I needed was another degree at this point in my life, but the program here has been totally worth it. The radio workshop with John Dinges, Rick Karr and Amy Costello has set a high bar. I'm hoping I'll get the same level of training and attention at NPR but, honestly, that class is going to be tough to beat.

ing from Columbia I worked for *Fortune*, covering energy and oil and international business in places ranging from Kazakhstan to Russia's Far East. In 2005, I left *Fortune* to write a book for Henry Holt/Times Books; during that time I also was on the adjunct faculty at the University of Oregon's school of journalism and mass communication, teaching a foundational reporting skills class.

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