

Convention deals advice, memories

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As I sat down for the “Let me tell you a story” seminar in the Sheraton Hotel in Denver, I expected a veteran journalist to tell me what I didn’t know about journalism; but I got a whole lot more out of it.

Leading up to the JEA/NSPA Spring National High School Journalism Convention, I really expect much. I mean how fun could something be with a name like that? But I was dead wrong. Not only did I learn innumerable bits of advice to improve our newspaper, but I also developed relationships with my fellow classmates that I never imagined.

Throughout the sessions that I went to throughout the trip, which ranged from working with a midnight deadline to involving snapchat in media, each speaker brought something new to the table. I learned to ask the right questions, don’t be afraid to ask anything, and put spunk into each story.

Beat Writer Troy Renck from the *Denver Post* taught me to tell readers what they don’t already know, but also to be a good listener. He said to analyze quickly when tweeting, and to not be afraid to add some humor.

Bobby Hawthorne from Austin demonstrated how to focus on a person in the event, not the event itself. He told all the listeners to be a good journalist you need to ask the obvious question, and to be brave and curious.

And finally, Scott Duncan, who is an advisor for *The Oracle* from Columbus East High School in Indiana, told me to be flexible and adaptable. He also said to always be prepared and interview with a purpose.

Another inspiring facet of the “Stories Elevated” was the keynote speakers. The Pulitzer-Prize winning team discussed panel-style how throughout their controversial story about military servicemen and their lack of benefits after they get discharged, they persevered and stuck with the story.

Yet the little bits and pieces of information that I have picked up along the way of this incredible experience amounts nothing to the bonds I’ve developed and the relationships that have been strengthened throughout this trip. Through our shared passion for journalism and our newspaper, my fellow staffers and I have connected in an unbreakable



bond.

This convention holds students, advisers, and people from across the globe, and being able to interact with them is an extremely rewarding experience. I realize how blessed I am to have the newspaper we have but also amazing friends and fellow staffers to make the whole experience better.

Overall, this whole convention has been way more than I could ever imagine. The experiences I have gotten from this are ones that I will carry for the rest of my life.