

BATTINTO L. BATTS JR., Ph.D.

PROFILE: Veteran higher education administrator; nonprofit executive; journalist; media and strategic communications professional.

EDUCATION: Doctor of Philosophy in Higher Education Management, Hampton University; Master of Arts in Media and Communications, Norfolk State University; Bachelor of Science in Mass Communications, Virginia Commonwealth University

EXPERIENCE:

SCRIPPS HOWARD FOUNDATION, Cincinnati, Ohio: (January 2016 - present)
Director of Journalism Strategies

- Oversee investments and programs in journalism and journalism education, engaging and collaborating with partners throughout the industry and higher education with the goal of supporting the strong education of journalists.
- Developed three-year strategic plan to grow Foundation's Journalism Fund.
- Serve as executive producer of the Scripps Howard Awards; drew 6 million+ viewers to the program in 2020
 - Oversee entry process and judging
 - Work in collaboration with The E.W. Scripps Company's Local Media and National Media divisions to plan and produce content for the show
 - Facilitate partner relationships with Facebook, Google and other media entities
 - Oversee \$500,000 budget for the show
 - Manage a team of nearly 200 staff, contractors and vendors
- Exceeded diversity goal for internship program two years early.
- Developed and launched the Scripps Howard Fellowship, a 12-month investigative journalism program for early career professionals; organize training events, provide continuing oversight and management.
- Manage Scripps Howard Internship program, distributing \$200,000 in grants annually.
- Manage Scripps Howard Foundation Journalism Grants, awarding \$100,000 annually.
- Manage relationships with the Howard Centers for Investigative Journalism at the University of Maryland and Arizona State University
- Cultivate partnerships throughout the higher education and journalism communities to support the Foundation's initiatives.
- Lead journalism fundraising efforts, raising more than \$8 million to support Foundation programs.
- Develop and deliver reports for the Foundation's Board of Trustees and funders.
- Supervise staff and vendor relationships.

UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI, Cincinnati, Ohio: (January 2017-present)

Affiliate Faculty, Department of Journalism

- Lecture on the business of journalism and media
- Review senior portfolios
- Serve on professional advisory committee, providing guidance for accreditation process with the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications

HAMPTON UNIVERSITY, Hampton, Virginia: (August 2007 - December 2015)

The Scripps Howard School of Journalism and Communications, Assistant Dean for

Academic Affairs: (May 2014 - December 2015)

- Developed and delivered a curriculum to meet the contemporary demands of the media industry.
- Developed a strategic plan that addressed instruction, recruitment and technology.
- Worked with faculty to enhance instructional design, using a variety of methods and platforms to focus on practical and theory-based education.
- Established and implemented standards for student portfolios and capstone development.
- Coordinated internship and job placement programs for students.
- Interfaced with recruiters and other company officials, arranging campus and corporate visits designed to create opportunities for students and alumni.
- Wrote proposals seeking funding for research and academic programs.
- Created and executed Graduate School Recruitment Day, attracting more than a dozen national institutions annually.
- Created and executed Memorandum of Understanding with American University in Washington, D.C., to recruit graduates and provide reduced tuition for graduate school matriculation.

The William R. Harvey Leadership Institute, Director: (October 2010-May 2014)

- Administrator for a department with 100 students and three faculty members.
- Responsible for strategic planning, marketing, external and internal engagement.
- Increased enrollment by 30 percent in 18 months.
- Raised scholarship monies from corporations and foundations.
- Managed and awarded \$250,000 in scholarship funds annually.
- Planned and executed national Student Leadership Summit.
- Taught courses on leadership development.
- Principal investigator for grant with AT&T to promote college preparedness through the use of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and mentoring.
- Principal investigator for multi-year grant with the National Park Service to enhance diversity in employment and park programs.
- Principal investigator for National Park Service Digital Storyteller grant program.

Scripps Howard School of Journalism and Communications, Professor: (August 2007 - October 2010)

- Taught courses in news writing, editing and media ethics.
- Launched a website for students to gain experience in multimedia reporting.
- Served as the adviser to the student newspaper, *The Hampton Script*.

THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT, Norfolk, Virginia: (May 2004-December 2008)

- **ePilot Manager:** Grew daily digital subscription base through marketing and advertising efforts; developed strategies to reduce newspaper distribution costs.
- **Newspapers in Education Manager:** Oversaw daily distribution of 30,000 newspapers to local K-12 schools; coordinated marketing and fulfillment; negotiated and executed vendor contracts.
- **Circulation Staff Development Manager:** Researched and devised strategies to help increase net paid circulation; developed new products aimed at growing market coverage; recruited and trained distributors, sales representatives and customer service staff.
- **Business Writer:** Wrote stories about commercial and industrial real estate, economic development, the business of sports and entertainment and general assignment.

TAMPA BAY TIMES, St. Petersburg, Florida: (July 2003-May 2004)

- **Assistant City Editor:** Supervised five reporters and award-winning metro columnist. Led coverage of a right to death case and a child abduction, which drew international attention.

THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT, Norfolk, Virginia: (August 1996-July 2003)

- **City Editor:** Supervised five reporters, an assistant editor, and a columnist.
- **Assistant Sports Editor:** Led a team of six reporters.
- **Night Metro Editor:** Responsible for evening operations of metro section.
- **City Hall Reporter:** Covered municipal government beat.

THE DAILY PRESS, Newport News, Virginia: (March 1996-August 1996)

- **Higher Education Reporter:** Covered public and private higher education in Virginia

SOUTH FLORIDA SUN-SENTINEL, Fort Lauderdale, Florida: (July 1993-March 1996)

- **Reporter:** Covered K-12 education, city government, community development and sports, including the Super Bowl and the 1996 Chicago Bulls historic season.

RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH, Richmond, Virginia: (May 1990-July 1993)

- **Police Reporter:** Covered law enforcement in the Richmond metropolitan area.

MEMBERSHIPS: Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications, Society of Professional Journalists, Online Journalism Association, National Black Graduate Student Association, National Association of Black Journalists.

BOARDS: The Society of Professional Journalists Foundation; Dean’s Advisory Council, Scripps College of Communication, Ohio University; Dean’s Advisory Committee, College of Communication, Architecture + The Arts, Florida International University; The Howard Centers for Investigative Journalism Advisory Boards; Envision Children Cincinnati; Springer School in Cincinnati.

OTHER: Certified by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications as an accreditation site team participant.

PRESENTATIONS/PUBLICATIONS:

- “Search for Yourself: Effective Academic Leadership Starts from Within.” A workshop given at the Scripps Howard Academic Leadership Academy, Louisiana State University, June 2016.
- “Teamwork and Collaboration Using Myers-Briggs.” A three-day workshop delivered at the Corpus Christi Caller Times for the Central Copy Desk Team, February 2015.
- “Nursing Leadership Dynamics and Myers-Briggs.” A workshop delivered for the Hampton University School of Nursing faculty, January 2014.
- “An Exploration of the Relationship Between Social Media Use and Engagement Among African American Student Leaders.” Batts (2013)
- “Social Media and Online Doctoral Persistence;” 2013 National Black Graduate Student Association National Conference, Detroit, Michigan.
- “Developing the Next Generation of Leaders;” 2012 African American Federal Employees Association National Conference, April 2012, Newport News, Virginia.
- “Presidential Decisions: An Analysis of President Obama through the Bolman & Deal Four Frame Theory;” The Virginian-Pilot, May 2011.

Dr. Michael Reid
Dean, College of Health & Human Performance
University of Florida
1864 Stadium Road, Suite 200
Gainesville, FL 32611

June 30, 2020

Dear Dr. Reid, and College of Journalism and Communications Dean Search Committee,

The College of Journalism and Communications at the University of Florida is a leader among its peers in higher education, with a unique combination of size, scope and balance of experiential learning and research. In light of this, the College's next dean may need expertise from several perspectives to lead this esteemed program on a continued upward trajectory.

Experience as a journalist and in strategic communications would enable the dean to effectively engage with the College's experiential education programs and tap industry connections for opportunities. A record of grantsmanship, managing funded research, scholarly publication and professional presentations would also prove valuable; as would experience supervising and collaborating with other academics. Time spent in the world of corporate philanthropy would provide a high-level exposure to the best practices among other programs, and insights on constructing funding partnerships. Operational experience overseeing large teams on major projects, and the ability to manage multi-million-dollar budgets are needed. A commitment to diversity and inclusion, and a track record of results are mandatory given the current challenges and opportunities facing our society.

That is a big job; one that I have spent the past three decades preparing for, strategically and intentionally. I have been called a "unicorn" because of my varied background. I have worked as a journalist, served as a strategic communications consultant, spent time in higher education as a professor and administrator, and earned a doctoral degree. Currently, I oversee major investments and programs for a respected journalism foundation. I grew up in a small, college town, the son of an elementary school teacher and a university administrator. My life and career have been shaped by journalism, communications and education. I have pursued opportunities in these fields, driven by a desire to play a major role where they intersect and to create opportunities for others. The University of Florida is one of only a few institutions that offer the opportunity to be impactful on a broad scale in this pursuit.

Our republic needs a strong and free press, ethical communications standards and effective and engaging platforms. This puts an onus on higher education to not only be the source of tomorrow's leaders, but a real-time problem solver, and resource. That has been my philosophy from my earliest days in higher education. It is also the lens through which I now evaluate collegiate programs as a philanthropic funder.

Serving as the Director of Journalism Strategies for the Scripps Howard Foundation has supplemented my substantial academic and practical preparation, while providing a platform to be an influential voice and thought leader. I have developed a broad perspective of higher education and the journalism and communications industries through collaborations with universities, corporations and organizations, work on several boards and task forces, and the analysis of hundreds of grant proposals. Surveying the landscape, I am particularly interested in building programs and partnerships that are innovative, experiential, interdisciplinary, reflect their community and promote diversity.

In light of that, the College of Journalism and Communications has figured prominently in the Foundation's ongoing analysis of potential funding recipients. This program's reputation is not new to me, as I have worked with many Gators over the course of my career, especially at the South Florida Sun-Sentinel and the Tampa Bay Times. I am also a fan of Dean Diane McFarlin, who was named the Scripps Howard Foundation's Administrator of the Year in 2019. I have engaged in discussions with Dean McFarlin and Margaret Gaylord, the College's senior director of advancement and alumni relations, and visited Gainesville this February to meet faculty and students. On my guidance, members of the E.W. Scripps Co. recruitment team joined me, as the company owns five television stations in Florida. The recruiters are now looking to the College as a source for talent and expertise for the company's newsrooms.

In my opinion, the next dean should maintain the College's current course of success while also exploring additional means of leveraging its unique strengths. When I first came to work in the state nearly 30 years ago, an editor told me that the eyes of the world are on Florida. It is an interesting and unique place; a microcosm of our society. That makes it an attractive place for a media company like E.W. Scripps, which has stations from Tallahassee to Miami. Florida is also a fantastic laboratory for journalism and communications education and research. The College has tremendous impact across Florida, with its various media properties, research programs and initiatives. I believe it can become more of a national and global force while serving its mission as a unit of the state's flagship university.

This strategic growth should be in areas where the University and the College have inherent advantages, enabling dominance in the space. The University's size and expertise across multiple disciplines makes high-quality interdisciplinary collaborations around journalism and communications topics more realistic than at most institutions. In addition to becoming even more of a source for Florida news and investigative journalism, there are potential opportunities in the areas of public health journalism and communications, diversity, equity and inclusion, sports, culture and, the arts. For example, the College's robust research activity in the area of STEM Translational Research is critically important, now, given the health disparities further exposed by the spread of COVID-19. Being located in one of the nation's most diverse and populous states presents an opportunity to lead the charge to overcome barriers of trust between underserved communities and the healthcare system.

By flexing its muscles, the College could garner additional attention and develop more partnerships with industry and funders. I have taken part in, or facilitated, many such collaborations and have developed the following model for examining their viability:



Batts, 2020

In this model, higher education functions as a partner to industry and funders looking to address issues, opportunities or needs. The collective expertise and resources enable both partners to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes. For this model to function, higher education needs leaders able to relate to the needs and desires of industry and funders while effectively managing their roles in academia. The model is built on trust and accountability, which enables relationships to grow and endure.

Relationships with funders and corporations are critical, but only part of the engine that drives successful collegiate programs. We can never lose sight of the fundamental purposes of postsecondary education, which are to engage in research, serve the community and prepare people for productive careers. From my view, the College has kept its focus on the students and created an environment that is both academically rigorous and supportive. We must maintain this commitment for higher education to continue the innovation and entrepreneurship required to remain viable, accessible and relevant.

The College appears well positioned to build upon its success. I appreciate your consideration of me for the opportunity to help lead the program into the future.

Sincerely,

Dr. Battinto L. Batts Jr.
Director of Journalism Strategies
Scripps Howard Foundation