

Leadership Track

2018 Mega Workshop
July 12-15
University of Minnesota

Who we are

Mark Witherspoon and **Ron Johnson** lead the leadership track.

Mark is a veteran news adviser at the Iowa State Daily newspaper, in Ames. He's a former reporter and an adviser at Texas Christian University, in Fort Worth, and Southern Methodist University, in Dallas.

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Ron is the former student-media director at Indiana University, Bloomington; Kansas State University, Manhattan; and Fort Hays State University (Kan.) He's now based in St. Joseph, Missouri.

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Laura Widmer is executive director for both Associated Collegiate Press and National Scholastic Press Association. She advised student journalists at Iowa State and at Northwest Missouri State University, Maryville.

Bill Elsen is a former editor at the Washington Post, where he served as recruitment and hiring director and as mentor to dozens of young journalists.

Valerie Dennis Craven is a Minneapolis-based editor and writer with 15 years of experience. Currently editor of [BUILDINGS media](#), she's worked at B2B publications for more than four years, mostly in content marketing. She worked for more than a decade at daily newspapers, including the Palm Beach Post (Fla.), Macon Telegraph (Ga.) and Cedar Rapids Gazette (Iowa), mostly as a designer and copy editor.

Kim Maxwell Vu is senior designer and art director at the Star Tribune, Minneapolis. Kim designs and illustrates its new magazine and its OpEx section. He's a graduate of Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana.

Chuck Clark directs student publications at Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, and he advises the College Heights Herald newspaper staff.

Paul Bittick advises the Mustang Media Group at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. Yeah, it's as cool as it sounds, and he makes the most of it with his students.

Chris Evans is student-media director at the University of Vermont and a former newspaper reporter. Chris is now president of College Media Association, the national advisers association, and he helps advisers and their students nationwide.

Thursday, July 12

10-11:15 a.m.

General session, plus some housekeeping details.

11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Our first track session: Welcome to the new world.

Spoon and Ron will lead the introductions. We'll get to know each other and map the plan for this workshop.

12:30-1:30 p.m.

Lunch

1:30-2:15 p.m.

Making the most of your leadership style.

Laura Widmer will explore what makes a good leader. And maybe what doesn't. She has some great experiences from which we can learn.

2:15-2:30 p.m.

Activity: Building leadership.

We'll spend a few moments sharing leadership experiences — with an eye on how you can get the most from this workshop.

2:30-3:45 p.m.

Serve yourself. Serve your staff. Serve your audiences.

Spoon's specialty (one of several, actually) is helping editors become leaders through service. He'll show you how. (Ask him about Five Guys, and he'll love you forever.)

3:45-4 p.m.

Break

4-5 p.m.

Thinking like an editor.

This job can challenge you, and reward you, like no other opportunity in your collegiate career. Bill Elsen, the master editor, will help set the mindset you'll need.

5-6 p.m.

General session. All-attendee social.

6-7:30 p.m.

Facilitated group dinners

Friday, July 13

8:30-9:30 a.m.

General session and panel: "Diversity in Media."

Listen up for one of the most important topics during our time together. We'll tap the insight of a panel with varying perspectives.

9:30-10 a.m.

Instructors can blather on, and you need time to start to build a network with other editors. Here it is.

10-11 a.m.

You're going to need a strong supporting crew. Spoon and Ron walk us through the Big Three: staff recruitment, retention and training.

11-11:15 a.m.

Activity: A little group work to help you plan your Big Three.

11:15-11:45 a.m.

"Transformation: Living in Today's Media Menagerie."

That's the focus of Valerie Dennis Craven, whose experience moving from a college newspaper to a commercial magazine will help us navigate our platforms.

11:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

You want 'em to read and to listen, right? But what happens when they don't — or won't? Spoon and Ron will lead a discussion on how you can engage audiences.

12:30-1:30 p.m.

Lunch

1:30-2:15 p.m.

The power of storytelling. Kim Maxwell Vu connects with readers through a new magazine and through the newspaper's vibrant opinion section. We'll learn more about how he does it and how he manages multiple projects.

2:15-3 p.m.

Plotting & planning. Take a few moments after Kim's session to build a list of ideas to take home and apply. And remember that master list we're building for Sunday morning.

3-3:15 p.m.

Break

3:15-4 p.m.

Visual journalism.

If visuals aren't planned and design is an afterthought, you'll simply spin your wheels. Ron will talk design fundamentals and trends that help the rookie designer and the experienced visual journalist.

More for Friday > > >

4-5 p.m.
Coaching your staff.
What's the magic formula for motivating your staff? Bill Elsen has some insights that have helped many a young journalist become a seasoned editor.

5 p.m.
Social event.

Saturday, July 14

8:30-9:30 a.m.
General session and keynote:
"The Power of the Story."
Kirsten Anderson, a former collegiate journalist, shares her life-changing experience on workplace harassment.

9:30-10 a.m.
Here's some more time to start to expand your network with other editors. Mix it up. Meet some new folks.

10-10:30 a.m.
Kirsten Anderson's topic has touched collegiate newsrooms across the country. Let's discuss it some more. How might it affect your coverage? How might it affect your staff?

10:30-11:30 a.m.
Conflict? What conflict? It's bound to happen, and you'd best be prepared for it, whether or not you expect it. Chuck Clark's students have tackled some tough challenges. He'll help you, too.

11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
If news is your game, you need a good sense of how it's promoted, marketed, funded and underwritten. Paul Bittick will remove some of the mystery — and tell us how his news students have some fun, too.

12:30-1:30 p.m.
Lunch

1:30-2:30 p.m.
Creating a culture of collaboration.
You heard Chris Evans lead the diversity panel. Now he'll visit us to describe how he and his students build a collaborative newsroom environment.

2:30-4 p.m.
Nailing the cover letter, the résumé and the job.
Bill Elsen takes the wheel again, and he'll offer some advice that will open doors for you. After he criticizes these clichés.

4-5:30 p.m.
General session and keynote with broadcaster Tom Scheck.

Sunday, July 15

9-10:15 a.m.
Media law and ethics.
Bring your Sunday-morning caffeine, for this session could make or break you as a manager. Chuck Clark navigates us through the ethical and legal framework you'll need.

10:15-10:30 a.m.
Break

10:30 a.m.-noon
General session and closing.

Safe travels — and good luck.