

August 17, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

I'm writing to enthusiastically endorse New Mexico News Port and its founder and director, Michael Marcotte, who also serves as a Professor of Practice at the University of New Mexico. I recently asked Mike to serve on a panel of journalism deans and directors at the AEJMC national conference in Minneapolis, as I have been a fan of his work for the past couple of years.

New Mexico News Port fulfills an important information need in New Mexico, a rural state with limited access to in-depth reporting, much like my home state of West Virginia. It also provides students with a modern, relevant journalism experience. In addition to covering local communities and producing quality journalism, students are learning how to use emerging technologies and practice in storytelling and audience engagement.

The success of New Mexico News Port shows that innovation can thrive, not just in major markets or so called "top" schools of journalism, but also in smaller places where there is a creative spirit, an entrepreneurial drive – and a passionate educator and journalist like Marcotte. As testament to that premise, the project has received numerous national and regional awards, including the "Grand Prize" in the ONA News Challenge, beating out much larger and better-funded programs.

From my vantage point as a long-time journalism administrator trying to lead change within my own institution, I believe we need many more projects and "experiments" like the one Mike Marcotte is leading at the University of New Mexico. Led by inspired and inspiring faculty, such projects are creating a much-needed culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in journalism education, while also helping to inform industry practice. Projects like New Mexico News Port are worth supporting and sustaining.

Sincerely,



Maryanne Reed
Dean

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