

THE EIJ NEWS

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Remembering Eva: An EIJ13 News Team Member Reflects on Twitter Experience

By **Jordan Gass-Poore**



Courtesy photo: EIJ13 News Team member Bobby Blanchard at work.

Bobby Blanchard remembered covering the panel led by actress and philanthropist Eva Longoria during last year's Excellence in Journalism.

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Blanchard had been assigned to provide social media updates about the panel.

“How might Texas, with it’s [sic] growing Hispanic population, impact the 2016 election?” **Tweeted** the University of Texas at Austin journalism senior.

Longoria was supposed to be answering Tweets throughout the panel, but, in the end, chose only Blanchard’s.

His social media savvy skills earned him street cred in-and-out of the EIJ News Team newsroom and his legacy lives on a year later. Victor Hernandez, co-adviser for both EIJ13 and EIJ14, said Blanchard, “a future Mark Zuckerberg,” posted more than 70 Tweets during last year’s conference.

Blanchard, with a laugh, said by phone between classes that this didn’t occur everyday, only when he was a designated social media correspondent for the conference, as he may have been (he said he couldn’t remember) on the day he attended the panel. He also later co-wrote an EIJ13 News Team **blog post** about the panel. When jokingly asked if the overzealous Tweeting led to carpal tunnel, he said he came “pretty darn close” to acquiring the syndrome during the conference.

“At the end of it my thumbs were sore from Tweeting, my legs were sore from walking and my head was sore from thinking,” Blanchard said.

He didn’t spend all his time at the conference staring at a screen. There was some time devoted to working the floor and mingling with fellow attendees.

This act was a rare feat for Blanchard, who said he gained a lot more self-confidence as an EIJ13 News Team member and learned more about journalism.

“If you want something, make it happen,” he said.

His experiences at the conference have led to stimulating conversations about the MTV television series “Teen Wolf,” which he argues is a “complicated show” where “definitely stuff happens,” with another EIJ13 News Team member primarily through social media and GroupMe, he said. The two remain friends till this day.

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