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01/16/2013

January 16, 2013

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January 16th, 2013 Posted in Arts and Life

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Special from the Utah Statesman

HO CHI MINH CITY, Vietnam—Sarah Dallof’s colleagues, professors and bosses would all agree on one thing—she can do it all. Whether behind the camera, putting together stories, editing, producing and, most of all, reporting about the world we live in—she has taken her education and experience to places she never expected.

The Aggie broadcast journalism alumna and KSL-TV veteran is now reporting from Southeast Asia, based in Saigon. Photo courtesy of Sarah Dallof

JCOM alumna Sarah Dallof graduated with a degree in journalism with an emphasis in broadcasting in 2003. After several years reporting for KSL-TV in Salt Lake City, she now files stories as a freelancer from across Southeast Asia, based in Vietnam.

“Reporting in Vietnam is exactly what I wanted and it has worked out perfect,” she said. “I have averaged about one story a month, and I have covered stories in Thailand, and Cambodia.”

Dallof said she has always hoped to visit Southeast Asia again, and continue her career while traveling.

“From the first time I visited this country I always had the thought in my head, ‘What if I was able to come over here and continue to do what I love and combine that with the adventure of living in southeast Asia?’” she said. “But if you would have told me five years ago that I would be living in Vietnam, no, I wouldn’t believe it.”

Retired Utah State broadcast professor Penny Byrne says Dallof was a student in several of her classes.

“She was an excellent writer, and was prepared to do any task in terms of journalism,” Byrne said. “Her commitment was very broad in the journalism major. She was really eager to do work in journalism, and I was very pleased when she went into broadcast. She was also an excellent producer.”

Dallof had various options as far as directions to take with her completed education, but said reporting is what she had always dreamed of doing.

“I think what drew me into reporting was the ability able to do something different every day, and to have insight on many people lives and see what they do and how they live,” she said.

Byrne says Dallof stayed connected to USU and Aggie TV News after her graduation. “While Sarah was a student in my newscast class I got to know her pretty well,” she said. “She took a law class and writing class from me as well. I invited her back to Utah State after she graduated for student career days and things like that.”

Dallof’s colleagues at KSL-TV valued her skills and natural curiosity. “At KSL we look to hire people who are good storytellers, are naturally curious and can look at things a little bit differently, and are interested in the world around them,” said Keri Wilcox, deputy managing editor at KSL. “And it helps that she has a fun, outgoing, bubbly, gregarious personality that came across on the TV really well.”

Dallof said she would love to continue reporting abroad and learning new things in the future.

“I have learned while living in Vietnam,” she said. “Shaking up the world really opens your eyes to all the possibilities and careers. I would love to continue reporting internationally.”
Wilcox said they were very lucky at KSL to have Dallof continue as a reporter in Southeast Asia.

"It was a pleasant surprise when she offered to do freelance reporting for us as she traveled to Vietnam due to reasons from her personal life," Wilcox said. "We jumped all over it when she said she would love to report internationally. I mean, what other Utah news station can say they have a Southeast Asia bureau?"

Dallof said it is unique to report in different countries due to the major changes in the press laws, and you might not be as welcome or treated respectfully.

"It is completely different from reporting somewhere where I can call up nearly anyone and receive the information needed for my story," she said. "I have been fortunate enough to have all my shoots go well out here, people are gracious, and it has been a great experience. Although my Vietnamese isn’t the best, and isn’t fair to anyone."

Dallof is a member of Kappa Delta, and said she was excited to share a visit from her sorority sisters a short time ago.

“These are three friends I have had for years that came to visit me in Vietnam,” she said. “They flew out for two weeks to stay with me, we stayed in Ho Chi Minh City, went up the coast to beaches, and we had a blast.”

Dallof said she enjoyed her time in Logan, and had many fond memories of her college years.

“My favorite memory of Utah State would probably any of the True Aggie nights or Homecoming nights,” she said. “Going to the ‘A’ with all of my friends and meeting so many people there is a major highlight of my college years. Utah State is just such a close-knit school that offers so many activities to meet new friends—I absolutely loved it in Logan.”

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