

At A Glanz

My LI News Story

By Rich Glanzer



Hello all. This is my debut of my new column, "At a Glanz" here at 516Ads.com.

My name is Rich Glanzer, and I'm a proud Long Islander. Outside of a half a semester stint at Suny New Paltz in 1994, an eight month gig as a TV reporter in Utica, NY, and a five month voyage to Vegas back in 06', I've spent my whole life living in Long Island. This column will highlight the best kept secrets I've discovered on the Island.

When people watch television news, many think the reporters got their job because they look good and they know someone high up at that station. Both help, because it's hard to get your foot in the door at a small television station to start your career. Most stations want experience. It's a very frustrating problem for many because how do you get experience without any? The answer is at Long Island's best kept secret, LI News Tonight.

LI News Tonight is my home. It's a class at the New York Institute of Technology's Old Westbury campus. In my very biased opinion, it's the best class in the world. LI News teaches students how to become a television reporter or cameraperson. The day starts at 8:30 a.m. The students bring in a newspaper to catch up on the previous days events. The camera operators go into the back room where they test out the cameras, to make sure they work properly.

At 9:30, Carol Pack the Assignment Editor, writes on the big board the stories that the reporters will be going to. Gary Licker the director of the show assigns who will shoot the video for the reporter. When I was at LI News, reporters often shot their own video. That's called a One-Man-Band and at many small market television stations, reporters are asked to shoot their own video.

Once out in the field, LI News reporters are side by side with professionals from every Long Island and City stations. On major stories, the national media will be there as well. LI News

once even had a shot so great of then President Bill Clinton that national networks called and asked for the video. At LI News, I've personally interviewed Hilary Clinton, George Pataki, Chuck Schumer, Hank Aaron, Mike Piazza, Bill Parcells, and even Wayne Gretzky. You don't get that kind of experience taking Journalism 101 at most colleges!

Once the reporters feel they have enough video and sound bites for their story, they head back to the station where they view their footage. They then write the story and read it to News Director and anchor Ken Eckhardt, or Carol Pack. Ken, the funniest, most sarcastic, and yes, best teacher in my very biased opinion then asks thousands of questions and helps the reporter re-write the story. You know you're ready to move on when he says, "Good" and changes nothing.

After voicing your story, you put the B-Role (the video you gathered) in and edit the story. Gary Licker, the fastest editor in the world moves you along if you're going to slow. You know you're ready to move on when after he watches your story and says, "It's good!" However you know you're nowhere close to moving on when he says, "It's fine." In other words, Good > Fine.

At 5:15 Ken happily puts his makeup on and gets ready to anchor. Gary directs the show and the students help with the teleprompter, audio, and tapes. The show lasts 15 minutes and after the final credits flow off the screen, everyone can go home, and come back the next day.

I can't count how many of my former classmates are now television reporters and cameramen all over the country. In one semester alone, 10 of us got news reporting jobs.

For two years, I had the special privilege of working with Carol, Ken, and Gary. I helped direct, produce, report, shoot, edit, and most importantly teach the students how to become reporters or camera operators. Today John Bradley has my job.

Working at LI News Tonight was my favorite job of all time. LI News can be watched Monday-Friday at 7:00 on Telecare, Channel 29. I look forward to using my lessons learned to bring 516Ads.com readers the best of Long Island.