***“A Passion for the People”***

By: Mike Clements

An unadulterated passion for one’s craft is often the driving factor behind a person’s level of success. A fascination with people and the stories that each one has to tell is what seems to drive Madeline Novey, a higher education reporter at the Fort Collins Coloradoan.

For the past four years of her life, Madeline has been seeking out people and helping them to communicate their message to the masses. After serving as Editor in Chief of the Rocky Mountain Collegian, Colorado State Universities student run newspaper, Madeline has since been working as a reporter for local daily newspapers like the Loveland Reporter Herald and Fort Collins Coloradoan. Her thirst for the art of journalism has helped her to rapidly ascend the ranks within her career field and find a cozy niche in the city’s journalist community.

“Journalism allows you to live vicariously through others,” Novey said. “You get to go into their lives at either the best or the worst moments and find what they’re willing to share with you and that’s something that has always astounded me.”

This optimistic outlook would eventually lead Novey directly onto her career path; however, this was something that was not initially realized by the young writer.

Novey came to Colorado State University with ambitions of majoring in Biomedical Sciences and becoming a Chiropractor. After taking some classes in her field of interest, she soon realized that this was not the right career path for her. She missed writing and story telling and when some friends convinced her to try to write for the student run newspaper, she jumped at the opportunity. She applied in April of 2008 and fell in love with what it meant to be a journalist.

Looking back today, Novey greatly appreciates and values the time she spent participating in student media at CSU. “It was what prepared me for the profession,” she said. “I took some really good classes, but it was the so called ‘living laboratory experience’ that prepared me for the real world. It was having to be in charge of a living, breathing daily product. I really figured out how to be a professional journalist.”

Novey’s first assignment for the Collegian was to cover an on-campus event featuring a producer of ‘The Simpsons’ television show. “It was a late event and I ran back to the newsroom to write the story and it was a mess,” She said. “My editor took it apart and put it back together but he told me he though I would be good at this and I just got the spark.”

This spark would carry her through the ranks of the collegian from reporter to senior reporter to assistant manager to news managing editor and eventually all the way to Editor in Chief in her senior year. From there, an internship at the Reporter Herald soon became a full time job as an education governance reporter there. “I was in charge on the school boards and budgets,” Novey said. “(The Reporter Herald) is where I really found my passion for education reporting.”

As this passion developed she found new opportunities in the form of a job offer from the Coloradoan in May of 2012. Novey is now thriving in a newsroom setting that attempts to break the mold when it comes to day-to-day operations. The larger size of the staff at the collegian and great leadership are things that Madeline values greatly in her current job. “The opportunity to cover higher Education in a college town is huge,” Novey said. “We’re given time to work on stories and we try to focus on the big picture. We’re encouraged to synthesize information, connect dots, and present journalism in new ways.”

While Novey is not completely sure of how her future in the profession will play out, she has a strong grip on the ideals that she values most. “One day I would love to find myself in the position that my editors are in, helping people do this work,” she said. “It’s about teaching people this amazing craft, getting them excited to tell stories.”

There seems to be a clear passion under-riding everything that Novey does in her career. She is very aware of the fact that all humans have a special story to be told and that we all deserve to have this story heard. That type of refreshing optimism seems to be pulling her strait to the top of her dreams and aspirations.

When prompted to give her advice to a generation of young, aspiring journalists, Novey said simply, “Don’t be afraid to take risks. Let your natural curiosity guide you.” This piece of advice appears to have served her quite well. There is seemingly no ceiling for how high this reporter can rise in a field that is notorious for elevating those that know how to spin a good story. Novey’s ability to relate to the human condition and share the ways in which it communicates itself allow her to distance herself from the everyday reporter and provide meaning to the term Journalist.