

Brian Rackham, District 6 Candidate Statement

Thank you to those who nominated me to be a candidate in the BEA District 6 election. I am an Associate Professor of Practice -- Journalism at Northern Arizona University and Director of our Media Innovation Center. The Center is home to our immersive learning programs in television news, digital media, print, filmmaking and radio. I serve as faculty advisor to our television newscast, NAZ Today, which was awarded first place for student newscast (produced four days per week or more) in 2018 and again in 2019. Our radio station, KLJX-LP received BEA's signature award for best radio station in 2018. I also teach podcasting.

Most of us are well aware of the challenges facing the broadcasting industry and the uphill battle digital content creators face as they try to generate sustainable revenue. BEA has already done a great job of embracing these challenges, but we must widen our tent further to prepare students to embrace change and we must continue to give our members the tools to stay ahead of the curve. A significant portion of my career has been devoted to media management positions, both in radio, television and higher education, and I would like the opportunity to serve this important organization.

I am currently working on my dissertation at the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication and plan to complete it within the next year. My research is focused on the future of journalism and business models that will help it thrive in the future.

My teaching is focused on applying theory to practice; I work in an immersive learning lab. Our students -- particularly at the undergraduate level -- need a chance to participate in real-world learning experiences whenever possible to get the "reps" they need to succeed in today's media workplace.

I have been a member of BEA since 2013 and served on a number of panels (at least two each year since 2015), and have created and moderated two panels, one each in 2018 and 2019. Higher Education became a part of my life after an extensive and varied career in radio, television news management (KCNC, KOB, KKTV), a stint at AP Radio in Washington DC as a national writer, desk supervisor and anchor, and working as a tech blogger in the mid-2000s.

I served for two years on the board of the Children's Literacy Center in Colorado Springs and was a co-founder of a new Rotary Club chapter in the Phoenix area. I've served as a National RTDNA (then RTNDA) Murrow Awards judge for two consecutive years. When I was News Director at KKTV, Colorado Springs, our team was awarded two National Edward R. Murrow Awards, including Overall Excellence (Markets 50 and above) and Spot News. I am a two-time Emmy nominee and the recipient of local and national awards for my work in radio. Here at Northern Arizona University, I was fortunate to have been selected to participate in the University Leadership Program last year.

There are excellent candidates available on the ballot for District 6, each of whom could provide strong leadership. It is my hope that you will find that my widely varied skill set and management experience is sufficient to earn your vote.