

ASURA Annual Meeting April 4, 2019

Tara welcomed everyone to the annual meeting. She thanked the Board for their participation. She also thanked the committee and subcommittee chairs for their work coordinating the efforts of the various committees. And finally, she thanked the office volunteers for their work.

Guest Speaker

Tara then introduced our speaker for the event, Dean Christopher Callahan. Dean Callahan is the founding dean of the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication at Arizona State University and vice provost of the Downtown Phoenix Campus. He is also the CEO of Arizona PBS. More information on Dean Callahan's background and achievements can be found at <https://cronkite.asu.edu/about/faculty-and-leadership/faculty/callahanbio>.

Dean Callahan began his presentation by giving a brief overview of the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication. He mentioned that the location of the school, in the US's 5th largest city, provided many opportunities for the students to work on stories that are relevant to the Arizona, and Phoenix, community. He likened the school to a "journalistic teaching hospital" that is designed to not only provide a working education to the students, but to also provide an unbelievable service back to the community. Students actually "do news", not just learn how to do it! They work on stories very different than what we find on the regular local news networks. Their stories focus on stories that are of concern to the Arizona community.

Dean Callahan mentioned that the current faculty consists of five (5) Pulitzer Prize winners in journalism. Different from other schools, the faculty spend time, not doing research, but actually "doing news" working along side the students in the news room or on location. He stressed several times that the purpose of the school is to teach students and to provide service to the community. He also indicated that the best part of the school is the students and those students are smart, passionate and dedicated to learning!

Some of the questions that were asked during the Q/A session were:

- How do we protect ourselves from the lack of credible news sources?
 - Dean Callahan responded that credibility in the news media has eroded over the past 15 years, primarily due to the introduction of cable news networks and the internet. Cable news networks are on 24 hours a day and have lots of time slots that need to be filled, so they fill them with "talking heads" that basically argue and shout at each other! The internet is a fast and cheap way to spread news! In the past, you needed licenses, buildings, equipment, staff, etc. to operate a broadcast news agency or a print news agency (newspaper). Now all someone needs is a \$100 computer and access to the internet! This makes it harder for us as consumers to determine what is real and what is not!
- How do we change the economic model to promote discussion and not the "talking heads yelling at each other"?
 - Stop watching those shows! If people didn't watch them, they wouldn't be on TV. Also new media leadership needs to change their focus and get rid of the "talking heads". Dean Callahan stressed that over and over again, PBS is ranked as the most trusted and reliable source of news in the US!

- Is it appropriate to regulate internet content?
 - The Dean's opinion is that it is dangerous to regulate content. He commented that our country was built on freedom of speech and the marketplace of ideas.
- Will we ever see another Don Bolles?
 - Dean Callahan talked about how after Bolles was killed, journalists from around the country came together in Arizona to continue Don's work, known as the Arizona Project. He said there are many Don Bolles out there and many in the Cronkite school!
- Other topics addressed were the border journalism program, media at political rallies, and the connection between the White House and Fox News.

Business Portion

Tara again thanked the Board and recognized the outgoing Board members – Tony Brazel, Jay Butler, Jeri Meeks, and David Schwalm. After thanking Barry McNeill for compiling the annual report, she passed the gavel on to Jan Thompson, the President for the 2019-2020 term.

Jan thanked Tara for her work as President. She introduced the executive board for the 2019-2020 term – Carl Cross – Vice-President, Tara Roesler – Past President, Pat Schneider – Secretary and Barry Bruns – Treasurer. She then introduced the new Board members – Jane Carey, Carl Cross, Larry Carlson, Evelyn Cesarotti and Frank Koonce. She also introduced Connie McNeill who is filling the term vacated by a recent resignation. The committee chairs were also introduced. Jan also acknowledge the office staff.

Jan then outlined her three main goals she hopes to accomplish as President –

1. Increase the visibility of the ASURA on all campuses along with increasing retention of members, especially those who became members as part of their retirement.
2. Recruit more members to be involved in committee work.
3. Have fun with the group!

Jan indicated that the theme for her Presidency is “Enjoying our prime times!”

Joy Shearman mentioned that our scholarship recipient, Jennifer Pelloni, was unable to be present in person. However, she did send a video which was played for the group. Jennifer works with the deaf and hard of hearing community. Her goal is to open a child care facility that is operated by deaf adults to serve the deaf and hard of hearing children.

Dave Scheatzle presented a 20 minute compilation of some of the interviews captured as part of the video history project.

Tara brought the meeting to a close and then directed those who were staying to take part of the facility tour to meet up with our tour guides!