



The phone's ringing. It's early and still dark outside.

"Hello."

"Tiffany, there's been an accident outside of Manjimup. We're sending you down in the chopper. When can you be ready?"

That's happened a number of times – rushing to the car, half asleep, still getting dressed.

I've worked in television as a news journalist for two years. It's challenging, competitive, relentless and most of all, great fun!

I remember when I became interested in journalism – it was in Year 10 during one of Mr Ward's English classes. I made arrangements to do double media studies as my electives with Mrs Makely. After graduating from Helena, I travelled for a year before starting a journalism degree at ECU. I then auditioned for WAAPA's broadcasting course and was accepted. I walked into WAAPA wanting to work in radio and walked out with a job in television.

During my four years at Uni, I did hundreds of hours of work experience in television, radio and print journalism, some wonderful, some woeful but all useful. Either way, work experience is crucial if you want a job in the media industry. A degree is very nice, but it's the experience that gets the news director's attention.

During Uni I worked in the newsroom at Nova 93.7 radio and wrote for a Perth based food magazine. Yes I did restaurant reviews. Yes it was fabulous!

In 2007 I started working for WIN news. I'm a VIJ (video journalist) which means I film my own stories – a cameraman and journalist in one.

With WIN, I've travelled as far north as Kununurra and south to Esperance and spent time in Geraldton and Kalgoorlie. I've worked out of WIN's Perth office and now I am based in Bunbury.

On weekends I regularly travel back to the city to work as a journalist for Channel Nine news.

Being a journalist is very exciting. You travel, meet new people, see incredible things and every day you're doing something different.

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That said, television journalism isn't for the faint-hearted. You witness confronting sights that stay with you. I've seen horrific injuries and even a dead body, and had to get a story from people in their darkest hours, trying to comprehend the loss of a loved one.

Some of my memorable career stories so far include covering the Bridgetown bushfires, the mass whale stranding in Augusta and Leavers in Dunsborough. I've been down caves, up in helicopters, threatened by bikies, stuck in a bushfire, chased by cows and dug my car out of bogs a number of times.

Last year I won a rural media award for my coverage of a man lost in the Goldfields for four days. I was driven around by a man with no legs and almost killed by a wild camel, but it was all worth it when I was the only journalist there when the prospector was found alive.

My advice to any students at Helena College who are thinking of a career in journalism is start reading newspapers and watching the news, keep up with new technology, saturate your brain with information and start questioning everything.

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