

In the 20 years I spent working in local television newsrooms I understood my responsibilities to our audiences, but I didn't think much about the freedoms I had as a journalist. I took them for granted. When I came to Ohio University and had the opportunity to conduct international broadcast journalism training, especially in developing democracies, my eyes were opened.

My ethics students could always tell when I returned to the U.S. from one of these trips because I hauled out my soap box and preached about the importance of protecting our First Amendment freedoms. Never did I imagine that those students would face many of the same risks and restrictions in serving their publics as those courageous journalists in developing democracies.

The responsibility part of PF&R also is vital right now. With trust in journalism at an all time low, and 'facts' up for question, we must look inward at our responsibilities as journalists and strategic communicators, and outward to communicate how we meet those responsibilities.

There has never been a more important time to focus on Professional Freedom and Responsibility in journalism, especially for an organization of educators training and preparing the next generation of journalists. That's why I want to continue my 20 years of AEJMC service as a member of the PF&R Standing Committee.

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