

Helen Marketti's Music Corner



By Helen R.
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An Interview with Doug Mummert, Chairperson for NATAS National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences

Doug Mummert took a bit of a scenic route to his current position as Chairperson for NATAS. He represents the Phoenix area which is also inclusive of the Rocky Mountain Southwest Chapter. However, NATAS covers television, broadcasting and journalism around the country. There are 19 chapters collectively.

"I was a firefighter in Phoenix, Arizona. I was captain at the time and was put in charge of television production for our fire department as it was related to training and public service information for the city of Phoenix," Doug explains. "One thing led to another and the regional chapter sent me a letter requesting my input in judging community service entries for the regional Emmy Awards which were going to be held at our local NBC affiliate."



He continues, "After some time had passed, I was asked if I would be interested in running for the board for the region. It is interesting because I am from a public safety industry whereas many of my colleagues are from outlets such as news anchors and journalism. I continued to gain knowledge, learn and grow within the organization. We have a such a diversity of different individuals who serve on our board from around the country. It's a great group of people who help to administer everything that we do."

"NATAS (National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences) was founded in 1955 in New York City," said Doug. "The reason it was established in New York was because at that time, all television production was in New York City. Eventually, many production outlets started in Hollywood. NATAS administers The Emmy Awards."

"Scholarships through NATAS started several decades ago, although I do not have an exact time frame. I must say that this year has been our best year. We have given \$100,000 worth of scholarships and grants to eight college bound high school students who are pursuing a career within the television arts and sciences."

There are specific guidelines and criteria that must be followed when applying for a scholarship. "There is a process," said Doug. "We accept applicants in the fall and in the spring. There are essay and video submissions. High school students can apply for more than one scholarship. The Scholarship Selection Committee thoroughly considers each applicant's

work. Students may attend any school of higher education of their choice. We have a process to present the scholarship to the student. For example, we have the Jim McKay Scholarship that is awarded to a student pursuing a career in sports television. There is a Mike Wallace Scholarship awarded to a student who is pursuing a career in television journalism."

There is also a scholarship named after Doug (Douglas W. Mummert Scholarship) which is awarded to a student pursuing a career in any aspect of the television industry who has made a positive impact through community service.

Potential applicants may apply through the following website; TheEmmys.com "It's important to get the word out to as many people as we can. We like to cast a wide net and be inclusive. We receive several hundred applicants. Once a student is on the website, there is a "scholarship tab" that will explain how to apply. There are job openings posted as well as paid and unpaid internships. One thing I always like to mention is that our President and CEO, Adam Sharp was once a scholarship recipient. I like to hold him up as an example to young people," said Doug.

Adam Sharp has been an Exec at CBS. He has served as the Senior VP at Twitter in charge of White House social media (During President Obama's administration)

What makes a good journalist and/or television reporter? "They need to have the passion for their work and you need to have the proper training to support that passion," explains Doug. "This kind of profession is not a 9 to 5 environment. News is always developing 24/7 whether you are in front of the camera or behind the camera. If you have the proper tools then you are in a situation that is set for success. When television reporters like Walter Cronkite where on the air, news stories were not written with a particular angle. Today with all of the media outlets available, it sometimes has more of a political or entertainment edge. It's important to realize that back then, reporters gave the news as it was without inserting their own opinion. They were trusted figures."

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