

Laura D. Testino

Memphis, Tennessee

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Writer and reporter. Partial to Southern cities, my dog Rita June, and the Alabama Crimson Tide.

Published by newspapers including: The Commercial Appeal, The New York Times, The Times-Picayune, The Tuscaloosa News, USA Today • and magazines including: Atlanta magazine, Catapult, Teen Vogue, This Old House magazine

Education, families beat reporter • The Commercial Appeal, USA Today Network-Tennessee

Memphis, Tennessee • August 2019 – Present

Responsibilities: Cover eight public school districts, including state's largest, state turnaround; public university, HBCU; children's health

Examples: What do you do when your child gets shot at school? When Amy Coney Barrett was a Memphis college student. How federal disability lawsuits complicate local and state COVID-19 policy authority in schools. What South Memphis 'neighborhood hero' Young Dolph means to Hamilton High's legacy. Reporting co-lead on broken interstate bridge; Black Lives Matter protests; workplace shootings

- +Uses public data, records, diverse source network, for in-depth features of history impacting current scene of municipal school districts and defacto portfolio city school district of 100,000+ students while regularly breaking news and capturing market for enterprise stories on Memphis' K-12 and higher education beats in a competitive news city.

- +Curates story selection by cultivating relationships among community and official sources across institutions, neighborhoods to publish weekly mix of 4-5 stories balancing daily coverage with enterprise, also identifying subscriber-only stories.

- +Team player on a scrappy news team. Comfortable filling the gap on breaking news coverage. Collaborates state, nationwide.

Arts, culture reporter • NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune

New Orleans, Louisiana • August 2018 – July 2019

Responsibilities: Compiled weekly music, arts listings of 300+ events; produced web content; wrote arts, culture, home stories

Examples: Who's behind Alvin Kamara's ski mask trend? The 89-year-old, 40-year female dive bartender. The permanent homes for Mardi Gras Indian suits. See inside new city homes. Dailies, reviews from: Jazz Fest, Mardi Gras, Voodoo Fest.

- +Pitched, wrote features for the arts and entertainment and the home and garden verticals, covering breaking news for each beat.

- +Carved out mini-beat on Black masking, social aid and pleasure club events, filing breaking Super Sunday news, profiles.

- +Web produced freelance home and garden content weekly.

- +Contributed two stories from New York Times "Cities for Tomorrow" event in New Orleans

Assistant digital editor, producer • This Old House magazine

New York City • January 2017 – July 2018

Responsibilities: Contributed to content for social media, website; streamlined new proprietary CMS; managed, produced UGC

Examples: Create, judge, produce, report home improvement contest and live event. Cover story profiles of TV show youth apprentices.

- +Collaborated with This Old House television talent to create behind-the-scenes multimedia articles of show houses.

- +Wrote and produced regularly for site and social media while also contributing front-of-book, features to magazine.

- +Worked with web developers and digital executives to streamline overall CMS and media-rich contest functionality.

Education • Skills

University of Alabama, summa cum laude, Dec. 2016: B.A. in journalism, B.A. in dance, minor in business

Skilled in AP Style, Flourish data viz, LexisNexis, PACER and other records systems; basic analytics tools; basic audio, video editing

Free time spent with my dog, in a dance studio, people watching from a front porch