

Laura D. Testino

Memphis, Tennessee

She/Her • LauraDTestino@gmail.com • @LDTestino

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; public university, HBCU; children's health

Examples: Joris Ray left MSCS, sister remains a high-ranking director. Collierville Schools took LGBTQ+ books off shelves while lawmakers considered ban. When Amy Coney Barrett was a Memphis college student. 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, school shootings

- +Leads reporting in competitive news landscape breaking news about termination of school superintendent, including how he supervised employees he allegedly had sexual relationships with, how his sister was hired and promoted with a 50% salary raise to a director position, and how he provided himself a nontraditional salary raise. Reporting prompted new school board policies.
- +As state promised a billion-dollar infusion into a new K-12 education funding formula, my reporting revealed that most school districts, while receiving more funds overall, would receive lower share of state funds than they had received under the old formula.
- +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 bar owner. 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 print 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