

# BRENNA SWANSTON

## CONTACT

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## EDUCATION

BS, JOURNALISM

**Minor:** Religious Studies  
California Polytechnic State  
University, San Luis Obispo

## AWARDS

Association of Alternative  
Newsmedia Awards 2020:  
*Second Place* Long-Form  
News Story

North Carolina Press  
Association Editorial and  
Advertising Awards 2019:  
*Second Place* Education  
Reporting

California Newspaper  
Publishers Association  
Better Newspapers  
Contest 2016:  
• *First Place* Agricultural  
Reporting  
• *Honorable Mention:* Profile  
Feature Story  
• *Honorable Mention:*  
Coverage of Education

College Media Association  
Pinnacle Awards 2015:  
*Third Place* Arts &  
Entertainment Story

CNPA Campus Excellence  
in Journalism Contest 2015:  
*First Place* Profile Feature  
Story

## DEPUTY EDITOR | Forbes Advisor / Remote / May 2022 - Present

- Collaborate with education vertical's managing editor and SEO team to ideate, outline, and assign 60 long-form, research-driven articles per month, aiming to educate readers about higher ed degrees, career paths, and alternative education options
- Manage updates editor to ensure all education content stays accurate and fresh
- Nov. 2023 - April 2024: Backfilled for managing editor during leave; saw record growth on vertical from ~114,000 weekly sessions to ~206,000 weekly sessions
- Dec. 2023: Led content optimization project to update 200+ legacy education articles in one month, contributing to 37.7% SEO growth rate
- Work with PR team to produce data-driven, education-based content, securing 228 backlinks in 2023 with an average link score of 79.53
- Support data team in designing and applying methodologies for articles ranking the best online universities, degree programs, and coding bootcamps
- Edit 45 to 60 higher ed articles monthly to ensure accuracy, clarity, and compliance with style, grammar, and SEO best practices
- Manage a globally distributed team of ~20 freelance writers and editors
- Created and continually update style guide for the education team

## FREELANCE WRITER AND EDITOR | Various Clients / July 2014 - Present

- For Slack (2022 - present): edit and rewrite ebooks, blog posts, and marketing emails to drive awareness of Slack tools, integrations, and new features
- For various tech companies (2022 - present): ghostwrite articles on behalf of executives for placement in publications like *Human Resource Executive* and *The Business Journals*
- For Queen City Nerve (2018 - 2019): wrote a three-part series exploring racial and socioeconomic segregation in North Carolina schools (*placed second for long-form news story at the AAN Awards, second for education reporting in the NCPA Editorial and Advertising Awards*)

## COPY EDITOR | Red Ventures / Full-Time / Remote / Sep. 2020 - May 2022

- Copyedited SEO and news content for Red Ventures' portfolio of higher ed (EDU) sites
- Maintained and continually updated EDU style guide
- Created and continually updated EDU's conscious language guide to ensure the use of inclusive, appropriate language across all EDU content
- Developed training and feedback system for EDU writers to keep them current on EDU's style guide, sourcing best practices, and other writing processes
- Helped develop QC process by which EDU copy editors audited live content monthly
- Promoted to manager after exceeding goals and demonstrating leadership skills

## STAFF WRITER | The Sun / Full-time / Santa Maria, CA / Jan. 2016 - June 2017

- Wrote long-form news articles and short-form briefs each week covering education, agriculture, immigration, religion, and environmental issues
- Copyedited the paper's news section weekly
- Backfilled for proofreader and managing editor when OOO
- *Won first for agricultural reporting at the CNPA Better Newspapers Contest; earned honorable mentions for profile feature story and education coverage*