

Milwaukee journalist to speak at UWO on reporting in warzones

by Mandy Potts - Thursday, September 29, 2011

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Journalist Meg Jones said the stories she's written while in Iraq and Afghanistan aren't very different from the stories she tells from her home newspaper in Wisconsin.

"There is a beginning, middle and end...there is a reason you're writing the story," said Jones, a Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reporter who has been embedded a half dozen times since 2002.

Jones will speak to University of Wisconsin Oshkosh students and community members Oct. 7 in *War: Through Her Eyes* about her experiences as an embedded reporter. She hopes to answer a lot of questions, talk about what she's seen and done over the years, share some photos and offer a little career advice to those who might be interested in traveling to a warzone.

The discussion, which will be held at Reeve Memorial Union's theater, is part of the student-produced series *War: Through Their Eyes*, which involves stories and podcasts about war experiences of UW Oshkosh students, faculty, staff and alumni.

Jones was most recently in Afghanistan during July and August. Prior, she's been embedded with Wisconsin units in Iraq in 2002, 2005 and 2008 and in Afghanistan in 2006, 2009, as well as last summer.

"As long as there are Wisconsin folks over there, I think there is a need to write about them," said Jones, a Wisconsin native and 2003 Pulitzer finalist.

From her experience, Jones said she has learned a lot about the military and what it means to be reporting far away from her home newsroom in Milwaukee. She believes reporting on the Wisconsin men and women who are overseas are the only way to truly show people what's happening during a war.

"They are just stories about what people are doing over there," Jones said.

She likes to talk about her experiences, which is one of the reasons she's coming to UW Oshkosh.

"I'm more than happy to talk about it because a lot of people have a one sided view of embedded reporters," she said. "It really, really annoys me when people say reporters only report the 'bad stuff' over there."

Journalism instructor Grace Lim is excited for Jones to be on campus sharing her stories. She believes it's important to give people the opportunity to hear Jones discuss her experiences because she wants people to understand the role journalist play during a time of war.

"These people, for the most part, are not trained soldiers; still, they put themselves in harm's way to tell the stories that must be told. I consider those reporters, like Meg Jones, to be heroes," Lim said. "Meg

Jones has seen war, has seen the men and women who are fighting these wars in a way most of us will never see.”

“For an hour, we get to see these wars through her eyes. This is an opportunity that I hope the campus community and beyond would embrace,” Lim said.

War: Through Her Eyes is sponsored by Steinhilber Gallery and Reeve Union Theatre, the UW Oshkosh’s College of Letters and Science, the Oshkosh chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists and UW Oshkosh Beyond Classroom Walls.

The presentation will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Oct. 7 in the Reeve Union Theatre. Those interested are welcome to bring their lunch and join Jones for further discussion in the Wisconsin room at Reeve Union following the presentation.

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