BEN CONNORS
PRODUCER // CREATIVE TECHNOLOGIST

// CONTACT ME

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// PROFESSIONAL STATEMENT

Ben is an experienced visual journalist and documentary editor with a rich background in mastering new technologies and leveraging them to create award winning formats, narratives and experiences. His goals are to lead collaborative interdisciplinary teams, and to create unforgettable non-fiction experiences that inform and empower audiences.

// AWARDS

CSIS EXTERNAL RELATIONS
2020 Lauder Think Tank Index // Best External Relations Public Engagement Program

ACTUAL REALITY
2019 OJA // Innovation In Visual Digital Storytelling

TITLETOWN TX
2017 Regional Murrow // Excellence in Innovation
2016 OJA // Innovation in Visual Digital Storytelling

VOTERS MAKE THE CALL
2018 Webby // Honoree for Best Interactive Video

BIG RED VR EXPERIENCE
2016 DigiDay // Best Use VR/AR
2016 MARCOM // Platinum Award

LAST GRAPH
2015 Media Rise // Pitch Contest
2014 Knight Prototype Grant // July Cohort

POSTTV
2013 National Murrow // Overall Excellence Online News Category

// WORK EXPERIENCE

XR Consultant // Various Clients 10/21 - Present
Developing, designing, project managing and advising for clients working on AR/VR products. Highlights include: developing a biofeedback feature for a 6DoF training simulation and earning a producer credit for the "Smithsonian & Meta | Moonwalk" exhibit.

Director and Dracopoulos Chair Innovation & Creativity // CSIS iDeas Lab 10/20 - 10/21
Directed in-house media lab for premier think tank. Managed team of 18 full-time employees including: producers, designers & developers. In 2020 the team's output grew to 180% of its 2019 deliverables. Served as creative director across a variety of audio, video, digital and print products. In 2020 we produced 24 podcast series, five video series, 850 print publications and launched or actively maintained 13 websites. Key innovations include: launch of "Data Unpacked" video series, a new satellite imagery analysis series, adoption of DataWrapper for more efficient dataviz production, launch of "ON24" interactive streaming products and new graphics package for live video. Revenue from 2020 FY projects exceeded $1.2M.

Lead Strategist // McClatchy, New Ventures Lab 1/18 - 10/20
Co-founded McClatchy's "New Ventures Lab," a destination for creators to advance nonfiction storytelling. Recruited and managed six technologists tasked with researching, producing, training and providing technical support in emerging mediums. Served as Product Owner for development of "Actual Reality," an OJA-winning nonfiction AR app that utilized ARCore SDK. Secured a $200k grant from Google to test new voice assistant product, developed prototype CMS and oversaw daily production. Partnered with Branded Content team to sell image tracking based AR experiences. Oversaw 3D-content creation for $10k deal between Sacramento Bee & Yahoo's RYOT Studio. Oversaw AR training 10+ McClatchy journalists.

Lead, Emerging Video Products // McClatchy 4/16 - 1/18
Expanded McClatchy's video and audio production capabilities through research, rapid prototyping, workflow design, training and partnership. Disciplines supported included: 360° video, Voice assistant briefings, Cinematic VR (stereoscopic + spatial audio), 3D capture, Interactive non-linear video, Volumetric video

Consultant Producer // Freelance 6/13 - 4/16
Clients included: Al Jazeera, Advance Media, Side x Side studios, The Washington Post and others. Work included: Consulting, 360° video production, 360° video training, web development, motion graphics and more.

// AWARDS

THE STREAM
2013 Gracie // Award For Outstanding News Talk Show
2012 Emmy Nom. // Nomination New Approaches To News & Documentary
2012 Webby // People's Choice Award For News And Politics
2012 Royal Television Society // Most Innovative Programme

// SKILLS

Video & Audio Editing: FCP, Premiere, Audition, Audacity, Reaper, Adobe Media Encoder.
Motion Gfx: After Effects, Apple Motion.
3D: Blender, Reality Capture, Z-Brush.
2D: Photoshop, Illustrator.
Production Equipment: DSLR & ENG Cameras, Structured Light Scanners, Stereoscopic 360, Ambisonic mics, 3-point lighting, GoPros.
Project Management: Jira, Taiga, Trello, RASCI & Gantt charting, Agile,
Code: HTML, CSS, JavaScript, PHP, C#, Python.
Packages & Frameworks: jQuery, Bootstrap, Three.js, AR.js, D3.js, A-frame.io, WordPress, OctoberCMS, GIT, FFMPEG, Imagick, Twig, Drupal, Vuforia, ARCore.
Apps: Android Studio, Google Play Store, xCode, Apple AppStore.
Game Development: Unity.
Database: MySQL.
Sysadmin: EC2, S3, Command Line, Apache.
IDEs: Atom, Coda, Visual Studio.
Immersive: Kolor, HumanEyes, Mettle, Facebook Spatial Audio Toolkit, DepthKit, iPiSoft.
Physical Prototyping: 3D Printing, Laser Cutting, Soldering, Screen Printing, Jig, Table & Radial Saws, Fusion360, Raspberry Pi, Projection.

// WORK EXPERIENCE CONTINUED

Founder // Last Graph LLC 9/14 - 4/16
Bootstrapped a digital platform for impact journalists and their audiences. The Last Graph was a database of embeddable 'actions' related to news and current events. Journalists and nonprofits cou use a CMS to create and embed these interactive actions in their stories.

Executive Producer // AJ+ 5/14 - 9/14
Served as product owner for the AJ+ mobile app during pre-launch ideation and development. Designed the "atomized" interactive news app. Developed low and high-res working prototypes of th app and developed prototype CMS to test and harden the workflow. Advised on the development of production CMS. Recruited and trained production team.

Graphics Developer // Al Jazeera Network 6/13 - 5/14
Developed production software for Al Jazeera's "The Stream." Designed and developed web apps to render graphics highlighting audience engagement on demand for live show. Created archival system to record live engagement data and provide tools for replaying, and analyzing it.

Innovation Editor, Video // Washington Post 4/12 - 6/13
Founded the nightly newscast "The Fold," the premier flagship content for The Washington Post's firs OTT endeavor: "PostTV." Managed daily production of the show by a team of four video journalists. Produced news segments. Created branding for the show, developed motion graphics templates, an formats. Helped software engineers plan and carryout integration of OTT CMS into existing video CM PostTV went on to launch broadcast personalities Chris Cillizza, Nia Malika Henderson & Jackie Kucinich.

Innovation Producer // Al Jazeera English 5/11 - 4/12
Designed and developed new user experiences & segments for 'The Stream.' Engineered and developed JavaScript based method for rendering graphics displaying audience engagement, during live broadcast. Served as chief video-editor, and asset manager for the show.

Creative Strategist // Al Jazeera English 1/11 - 5/11
Co-founded "The Stream, a 'social media community with its own daily TV show on Al Jazeera Englis Developed concept, established hybrid TV/Web production workflow, developed pre launch website and prototyped interactive pilot. Established engineering and production practices to use Skype for l interviews, which dramatically expanded the diversity of available guests and saved tens of thousand of dollars each year in studio and satellite fees.

Multiple Positions, // Al Jazeera English 04/06 - 1/11
As program assistant provided clerical and production support for documentary unit. As non-linear editor, edited breaking news, feature and documentary video packages. Work included color-correction, mixing music and audio effects, and designing original motion graphics. As senior non-line editor, coordinated daily interdepartmental workflow, field editing assignments, broadcast engineerin

// SOCIAL

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