



LEA ZORA SCRUGGS

✉ Lea.Z.Scruggs@gmail.com ☎ 305 469 9835 🌐 LeaZora.com



Career Objective

The heart of great journalism is storytelling that resonates—and that drives results. My extensive experience in uncovering impactful stories, engaging diverse audiences, and crafting compelling narratives has not only informed and inspired communities but also boosted engagement, expanded viewership, and contributed to organizational growth. I am confident my skills can support your newsroom's mission while delivering measurable value.

Work Experience

Investigative Reporters Editors

Chauncey Bailey Fellow

January 2025 – Present | Remote

- Reporting on birth defects and industrial pollution in South Texas. Project awarded yearlong fellowship, training, mentorship as well as editorial & financial support.

Scripps News (KRIS6)

Investigative Reporter / MMJ

May 2025 – Present | Texas

- On-air reporting, live and pre-recorded for broadcast, streaming & social media.
- Covering water, environment, culture, health disparities & corruption.
- OSINT methods and tools for in-depth reporting and investigative analysis.
- Producing, shooting, editing, graphics, pre & post production management.
- Public speaking for educational institutions and community engagements.

CBS News & Sports

Correspondent / Senior Producer

Nov. 2023 – May 2025 | Los Angeles

- Live segment reporter on KCAL for LA Sentinel's the "Community Insider" segment. Worked closely with editorial team to deliver weekly newscast, part-time.
- Freelance produced & directed of "Rethinking Strong: Black Athletes and Mental Health," a 30 min CBS Sports doc, featuring Ex-NFL player Ricky Williams & others.

FILM 45 (ENDEAVOR)

Director of Programming / Senior Producer

June 2022 – May 2023 | Los Angeles

- Managed premium sports and music docs for Endeavor (WME) Content.
- Served as a liaison between executive clients, talent agents & producing partners.
- Produced ESPN's "Why Not Us" series on Howard's golf team.
- Produced NFL Colts mental health campaign.

VICE News + VICELAND

Reporter / Producer / Director

August 2017 – June 2022 | Los Angeles

- Field produced, pitched & scripted for breaking news and cultural stories weekly.
- Supervised series "Trauma: Black Mental Health," "Receiver," a live pandemic music show, "Free Drugs," on psychedelics & "Future Proof," on young entrepreneurs.
- Freelance reported and field produced "The Ice Cream Show" for Viceland.

BuzzFeed Studios

Video Producer / Host

January 2019 – January 2020 | Los Angeles

- On-camera talent/host for YouTube channels and various other internal platforms.
- Shot, edited, produced and directed viral video content for social platforms.

National Geographic Studios

International Reporter / Producer

May 2016 – August 2018 | New York City + Los Angeles

- Associate International Field Producer in NYC for "Explorer," flagship program.
- Reporter/segment producer in LA for "RACE with Jay-Z".
- Reporter/producer for "Wicked Tuna: Hooked Up OBX" Seasons 5 – 7.

Awards & Honors

- Edward R. Murrow Award - Region 6
- Headliner's Foundation Award - Investigative
- 3X Texas Broadcast Awards Nominee
- Emmy Award - National News & Documentary
- DuPont/Crichton Award, Honorable Mention
- 2X Gracie Award, Alliance for Women in Media
- NABJ Salute to Excellence Award
- Best Documentary, Red Hook Film Festival
- Best Sports Documentary, Atlanta Docu. Festival
- Audience Award, 18th Brooklyn Film Festival

Skills

INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM

In-depth research of public records, data analysis, FOIA requests, internet forensics, fact-checking, background searches on individuals and corporations.

SHOOTING

Proficient shooting in vérité style - Sony FX3, Canon 5D, Canon C100, C300 MKII & Sony Alpha a7R

EDITING

Adobe Premiere Pro, Final Cut X, CapCut
Experience with Adobe Light room & Adobe Audition, Canva

SOCIAL MEDIA

Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, YouTube etc. for content creation, reporting tools, archival media and content aggregation.

Leadership

- ERG Co-Lead, POC Group, Vice Media
- ERG Events Committee, BuzzFeed BIO
- BuzzFeed Emerging Leadership Program
- Board Member, CUNABJ
- Board Member, Columbia Women In Media

Education & Training

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM, M.S.

SPELMAN COLLEGE, B.A.

DATA ANALYSIS & VISUALIZATION BOOTCAMP
MIZZOU JOURNALISM SCHOOL

HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT & EMERGENCY
FIRST AID TRAINING (HEFAT)

IMPROV 101 – UPRIGHT CITIZENS BRIGADE