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North Hardin grad back in home state for TV news gig

By BECCA OWSLEY THE NEWS-ENTERPRISE

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Paxton Boyd, a North Hardin High School graduate, covers a live news segment while working in Washington, D.C.

Submitted

Getting to know Paxton Boyd:

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Favorite TV shows: "Better Call Saul," "Breaking Bad," "Game of Thrones" and "The Office"

Favorite foods: Pizza, Sushi and anything Italian or Mexican

Favorite book: "The Obstacle is the Way", by Ryan Holiday.

Favorite sports team: Cincinnati Reds, the Kentucky Wildcats and Western Kentucky University.

Hobbies: Fitness fanatic, the outdoors, drawing, writing, video games and trying to take up golf

Family: A five-year-old daughter named Channing. "She's my anchor," he said. "She's strong, sweet, independent, happy, creative, confident - and most importantly, loving and kind."

Building a career in TV journalism, Paxton Boyd has had multi-station opportunities that led him back home to Kentucky.

Boyd, a 2004 graduate of North Hardin High School, went to Western Kentucky University where he earned a bachelor's degree in broadcasting and had a minor in psychology.


It was college where he said he "stumbled" into television journalism.

"I had absolutely no idea what I wanted to do career-wise," he said.

His parents wanted him to pursue a career in written journalism, but he didn't want to do that at the time. He chose to study psychology because he thought it was a diverse field and there would be several things he could do with that career.

After a few years, he lost interest in that path and switched to business because he thought it would be a safe alternative, but that wasn't for him either.

"A friend of mine who was in the broadcasting program suggested I give TV news a shot," he said. "I was intrigued, but it was so far out of my comfort zone at that time."



He eventually took classes and found the field fascinating. The next semester he did an internship at a CBS affiliate in Nashville in the sports department. He realized he could get paid to talk about sports for a living.

“I was hooked instantly and knew that was exactly what I wanted to do,” he said.

Boyd, now 36, started covering sports in Hazard and moved to various stations across the country from there and later became sports director at a CBS affiliate in Yuma, Arizona.

After that station was bought out, he took a sports director position at a NBC affiliate in Mobile, Alabama, which later led to a sports anchor and reporter position in West Palm Beach, Florida. He then switched to news shortly after the pandemic started.

Boyd freelanced at NBC Miami until taking a national news correspondent position with a international network in Washington, D.C. Two months after starting, it was shut down. Boyd found himself looking for a new position and that lead him back home to Kentucky. He is the anchor at ABC 36 in Lexington.

“It feels great, and it’s also a bit surreal that things just happened to shake out this way,” he said. “I never thought my career would lead back home to Kentucky but I’m so grateful that it did.”

Being close to his family was a main selling point, Boyd said.

“My mother is an absolute warrior and just finished her third bout with cancer,” he said. “My dad retired late last year after experiencing some health issues, so it was extremely important for me to be close to them.”

His mom, Linda Boyd, said his career has been a long, hard path. She remembers when he was a child, he drew all four of the anchors for a Louisville news channel and she still has that photo.

“He’s darn good,” she said of his work in television news.

She’s happy he’s close to home, Linda said.

“This is the closest to home he’s been since he went to college,” she said. “We’re thrilled.”

Linda said he puts 100% in all he does.

“He doesn’t give up, he’s a go getter,” she said. “It would have been easy for him to give up and do another career, but he knew someday he’d get the job he has right now in Lexington and he hung in there and got it.”

Linda said the family streams his news broadcast in Lexington twice nightly.

"It's funny to be watching TV and there's your son," she said. "We just can't get over it. We're so proud of him."

Because his jobs in television news were streamed live anywhere, he said it's been good to hear from people in his hometown who are following his work.

"One of my high school teachers and several of my old high school friends have started watching me anchor evening newscasts," he said. "That never gets old and it's an honor I don't take lightly."

One of his career goals is to win an Emmy and he keeps working toward making that happen. He also hopes to be a part of making his new station, ABC 36, the top leader in the Lexington market.

Paxton said his news director, Miranda Combs, has pieced together a team by adding chief meteorologist T.G. Shuck, sports director Jeff Piccoro and Boyd in the last few months. He's hoping audiences will stick with them and love the changes.

Through his years in the news business, Boyd also has been able to work with charitable organizations.

When he was in Florida for six years, he worked with and hosted events for Habitat for Humanity, Big Brothers Big Sisters and the Kiwanis Club of Palm Beach Gardens.

In Lexington, he recently emceed a gala with his co-anchor Erica Bivens to benefit the Woodford Humane Society.

"I've only been back in Kentucky for a little over a month, so I'm definitely looking forward to working with more charities and organizations now that I'm settled in," he said. "It's always been very important for me to ingrain myself in every community that I've been lucky enough to call home — especially here in my home state."

If anyone from his hometown wants to follow his work, Paxton said they can find him on social media or online at wtvq.com at 5, 5:30, 6 and 11 p.m. weekdays.

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