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## **The Missouri Photo Workshop**

I currently work as a staff photographer at the Charleston Gazette-Mail in West Virginia, and graduated from George Washington University (formerly of the Corcoran College of Art & Design) with a bachelor's degree in photojournalism in 2016. While I have been a working professional for about eight years now, I've known of the Missouri Photo Workshop since my sophomore year of high school when my first mentor described his own great experiences attending.

I have always looked to workshops to help me improve my work, attending at varying times the northern short course, Atlanta Seminar, TID and Geekfest. However, It was attending the 25th Eddie Adams Workshop that most profoundly impacted me; working with team leaders to cover the lives of those in the communities surrounding the Barn. Having the time and intimacy of those experiences, as well as the encouragement I received there, helped make me the shooter I am now. I appreciate the extended experience of the Missouri Photo Workshop, and that is one reason why I am applying.

The other is more to the heart of why I am applying. I work in an area that is deeply misunderstood and often misrepresented by outside outlets, who often refer to West Virginia through well worn stereotypes and tired tropes such as "Coal Country" "Trump Country" and other allusions to the forgotten white working class in a postindustrial era. While there is some truth to those commonly held notions, what has most struck me most about living here is how West Virginia defies all assumptions. It is a fascinating place filled with people who are passionate about doing whatever they can to make West Virginia a better place to live despite all of its hardships; of which there are many.

While I've reached a point in my career where I am comfortable with my technical skills as a shooter, I know that more important than how I shoot is what I shoot and why. I want to learn additional skills that will help me better serve the many communities that my paper covers. I want to know how to more effectively tell a story through a strong narrative and focus. How to do so in a way that is empathetic and not exploitative. These are some of the things that I hope to learn.

For these reasons, I would be thrilled to have the opportunity to attend the Missouri Photo Workshop. Thank you for your consideration.

-Craig Hudson.