

# RACHEL AXON

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## INVESTIGATIVE REPORTER

Experienced, persistent reporter with more than 15 years in newspapers who produces in-depth, compelling and accountability-driven investigations by using expertise in public records, background research, interviewing and data analysis. Skilled in breaking news and analyzing large amounts of information quickly to produce stories and videos. Effective in producing award-winning explanatory, feature and investigative stories that inform readers, expose wrongdoing and create impact. Excels at coverage at major sporting events, including five Olympic Games.

## AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Reporting | Interviewing | News Reporting | Feature Writing | Enterprise Writing | Breaking News | Olympics Coverage | Investigative Writing | Longform Storytelling | Online Journalism | Source Building | Research | Public Records | Freedom of Information Act | Data Analysis | Story Planning | On-air Analysis | Social Media | AP Style

## EXPERIENCE

**USA TODAY, McLean, Va.**

**July 2012 – December 2022**

**Investigative reporter**

**July 2018 – December 2022**

Investigated a variety of issues, with a particular focus on sports, institutional response to sexual abuse and Olympics.

- Researched and pitched short- and long-term investigations.
- Filed public records requests with government agencies and higher education institutions.
- Analyzed public records, data sets, lawsuits and other documentation.
- Interviewed sources for investigative stories, building an expertise in speaking to people about sensitive subjects including death and sexual violence.
- Wrote a variety of investigative stories, often synthesizing large volumes of records, data and interviews into compelling narratives.
- Partnered with reporters, editors and designers to optimize stories for website, print and social media.
- Won Associated Press Sports Editors writing contest investigative category, was a finalist for an IRE Award for sports investigations and was a semifinalist for Goldsmith Prize for Investigative Reporting for series on colleges' continued Title IX failures.
- Won SABEW award for government writing (large division), North American Agricultural Journalists's news category and was semifinalist for Goldsmith Prize for Investigative Reporting for series on COVID outbreaks in meatpacking plants.
- Finished fifth in Associated Press Sports Editors writing contest for story on state legislative efforts to bar transgender athletes from girls and women's sports.

**Olympics reporter**

**January 2016 – July 2018**

Led coverage of Olympics year-round, with responsibility for spearheading news gathering during two Games.

- Broke news stories during and outside of the Olympic Games.
- Pitched, researched and reported feature and enterprise stories.
- Covered five Olympics, from 2014-2022, in this role and as staff reporter at other Games.
- Won award from The John J. Curley Center for Sports Journalism for Excellence in Coverage of Youth Sports.
- Finished fourth in Associated Press Sports Editors writing contest in investigative category twice.

**Sports enterprise/investigative reporter****July 2012 – January 2016**

Covered a variety of issues in several sports through enterprise and feature writing, investigations and on-site event reporting.

- Pitched stories ranging from athlete profiles to investigations.
- Reported feature, enterprise and investigative stories.
- Produced enterprise reporting off news events.
- Broke news on a variety of stories, including Title IX investigations and Olympics.
- Covered a variety of events, including the NCAA Men's Final Four, X Games and the gymnastics World Championships.
- Placed in the top 10 in Associated Press Sports Editors writing contest four times - twice each for investigative and project reporting.

**NBC, Pyeongchang, South Korea****February 2018****NBC Olympics contributor**

Provided on-air analysis and commentary for Winter Olympics Daily show during 2018 Games

- Partnered with two other analysts and a host to break down the latest Olympics news.
- Gave expert analysis on results and news from freeskiing and snowboarding, sports which I have covered for nearly a decade.

**Orlando Sentinel, Gainesville, Fla.****September 2010 – July 2012****University of Florida Gators beat reporter**

Covered UF athletics program with focus on football and men's basketball.

- Reported games stories, breaking news and features on the beat.
- Produced enterprise and investigative stories.
- Maintained Sentinel's Gators site, blog and produced multimedia content.
- Finished in the top 10 in Associated Press Sports Editors writing contest for project writing.

**StarNews Media Group, Wilmington, N.C.****August 2006 – September 2010****Senior reporter - sports**

Led coverage of nearly 30 high schools while producing enterprise and investigative stories.

- Reported breaking news, game stories and features on local sports.
- Utilized public records and interviews to write and publish investigative series revealing dangerous conditions of a local football field house that led to its demolition and the construction of \$750,000 replacement building.
- Reported and wrote investigative series that led to a federal Title IX investigation of a local school district, resulting in changes to athletics programs and facilities at several schools.
- Developed and maintained a website and blog dedicated to prep sports.
- Produced multimedia content and anchored weekly sports shows.
- Won Associated Press Sports Editors writing contest for investigative and feature writing.

**EDUCATION**

St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure, N.Y.

**Bachelor of Arts from Russell J. Jandoli School of Journalism and Mass Communication**