

Q and A with Angie Muhs, a new leader with APME

Angie Muhs, executive editor of the [State-Journal Register](#) in Springfield, is the new president of the Associated Press Media Editors. [APME](#) and the [American Society of News Editors](#) agreed to merge this fall, creating the News Leaders Association. The merger of the two powerful journalism organizations comes at a time when the news media are under attack in unprecedented ways.

GJR spoke with Muhs about her job as the top editor of the paper of record in the Illinois state capital and about her new leadership role with APME.



Angie Muhs, State
Journal-Register
Executive
Editor. *[Rich
Saal/The State
Journal-Register]*

What are the biggest challenges facing community newspapers?

No segment of the industry has been spared the financial pressures and disruption; that means we're having to

consistently reassess what we do, and what our top priorities ought to be in serving our communities. That's one of the reasons APME has been such a valuable resource to me—the chance to connect with other editors and share our success stories and best practices.

How are you battling the “fake news” narrative at the SJR?

We let our local journalism speak for itself. Our readers know that our reporters are part of the community, too. We're committed to being fair and accurate in our coverage and accessible to readers who have a concern.

How can newspapers better connect with their audiences?

By being accessible, communicating, being transparent about how and why we do what we do, and also by hosting events to meet with and educate readers.

With all of the challenges in the newspaper business today, where do you continue to find your passion for journalism?

I still have passion because I know that the work that journalists do matters in informing the public and holding government leaders accountable. Look at the outpouring of support that so many local newsrooms saw after the horrific shootings at the Capital Gazette; many members of the public understand that the press is a critical component of a democracy.

If you were standing in front of a group of journalism students, what would you say to them?

The platforms may change, but I still believe there is an appetite in the public for unbiased journalism. We have a vital role to play in society. And, being a reporter really is one of the best jobs there is – how often do other people get paid to ask questions and learn about something new every day?

What are your goals for your new role at APME?

We'll be working together this year with the American Society of News Editors in preparation for our merger next summer—we're creating a new organization, the News Leaders Association. Our groups came together after much thought and study because we concluded that we are stronger together, especially at this pivotal time in our industry. We'll be continuing this year with our APME programming, especially NewsTrain, which is a low-cost, highly practical traveling training seminar that's aimed at helping journalists in all markets sharpen their skills. APME also will work closely in tandem with ASNE this year on core priorities for both groups—press freedom and access issues, media literacy and diversity efforts, among others. We'll also be strategizing about how the new NLA can be a valuable support resource for editors at all levels in all sizes of newsrooms.

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