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Persistence and an A-game attitude

Alumnus wins seven Emmys BY KATIE HUDSON ('10)

Persistence has paid off for **Brian Hamrick ('83)**, and he has seven Emmys to prove it.

Breaking away from his family's West Virginia coal mining roots, Hamrick did stand-up comedy in Orlando, Fla., after graduation. Three years later, he decided to pursue another career field related to his communications degree.

Taking an interest in news reporting from a friend, Hamrick went to every television station in Orlando in hopes of starting a new profession. Instead, he only found defeat. "I was offering to work for free. I had a degree, and I still couldn't get a job. That's just sad," Hamrick says.

Persistence helped Hamrick land a job at WDTV in Clarksburg, W.Va., in 1987. Only three months later, he started to get paid part time. A few months later, his job became a full-time position. By the time Hamrick left the station two years later, he had experience both behind the camera and as an on-air reporter.

"My dad asked why I didn't decide to go into the coal industry, especially since I would have been making more money," Hamrick remembers. "I told him that this is the most important thing I can do right now. It was something with purpose and value."

By summer 1988, Hamrick was working for the Oklahoma State University services department. By creating stories for the university, he helped pay for his master's in journalism.

The decision to move to Cincinnati, Ohio, and work at WLWT-TV in 1998 got Hamrick recognized by the Society of Profes-

sional Journalists, Cleveland Press Club and the Associated Press. His 10 years as a field reporter for the station also won him seven Emmys, two for best news reporting.

Hamrick says some of his awards were unexpected. "You

never know how the whole process is going to go," he explains. "You think you are sending in the best reports, but they don't win. And then you send in the OK ones, and they win." Hamrick is referring to his thoroughly researched report of a Congressional Medal of Honor winner, who sacrificed his life to save a fellow soldier from a grenade in Vietnam. That report did not win, but Hamrick won an Emmy for a more lighthearted report of a truck stop that serves as a church. It was shot in one night.

"Just by winning, you realize that your peers are appreciating your hard work," Hamrick says.

A typical day at work for Hamrick can be

summed up in one word – long. There is a daily morning meeting during which Hamrick must pitch four to six stories. From there, he hits the road in hopes of getting the best story. He usually works on two stories a day. Hamrick and his co-workers compare their day to a basketball game. "It's like when there is one second left in the game and a player shoots the ball. You're just watching the ball roll around the rim waiting to see if it's going to go in. That's how we feel every day before airtime."

In his 11th year at WLWT, Hamrick plans to continue his award-winning field reporting. "You have to bring your A-game every day. You have to think of every day as a tryout." ■



In just over a decade Brian Hamrick ('83) has earned seven Emmys as a TV reporter. He believes in bringing his "A-game" to work daily.