

JOHN "AUSTIN" HORN

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EDUCATION

Woodford County High School; Versailles, KY 2011 – 2015

Columbia University, New York, NY 2015 – 2019

Bachelor of Arts in American Studies

Honors: Dean's List (Fall 2015, Spring 2016, Fall 2018, Spring 2019)

EXPERIENCE

Lexington Herald-Leader; Lexington, KY Nov 2021 – present

Senior Political Reporter (promoted April 2025)

- Routinely held the [most powerful Kentuckians](#) accountable, [produces enterprise reporting](#) that helps [pull the curtain back](#) on [how Frankfort works](#) & [goes the extra mile](#) to break news
- Promoted to role focusing on Congress & federal politics in April, [first broke news](#) of Andy Barr's Senate campaign
- Led on-the-ground reporting response to historic natural disasters in [Kentucky's east](#) and [west](#)
- Developed statewide source network that amplifies colleagues' reporting as well as my own
- Gained facility with AI as a reporting asset, attending McClatchy AI summit & testing internal tool

Frankfort State Journal; Frankfort, Kentucky Aug 2020 - Nov 2021

Director of Investigative & Depth Reporting

- Digital [subscription growth rate doubled](#) during time at State Journal
- Led newsroom efforts to focus on enterprise reporting each week, launched the ["SI Digs" brand](#)
- Exhaustive work on [city scandals](#), [2020 election](#), government [diversity](#) and [ethics, police brutality](#) and more
- Coverage on [Kentucky State University](#) and the conduct of a Franklin County Sheriff's Deputy [drew national attention](#)

NPR; Washington, District of Columbia Sep 2019 - July 2020

Kroc Fellow

- One of [three fellows selected among](#) hundreds of applicants to train at NPR HQ, rotate through different roles for a year
- 3 months as a producer at Weekend Edition; pitched, wrote scripts for, and edited around 3 stories per week
- 3.5 months as a producer for Throughline, NPR's history podcast; pitched/co-wrote [episode on Eugene Debs](#)
- 4.5 months as reporter on NPR's National Desk and digital Newsdesk

Internship & Student Journalism Experience; San Antonio, Texas & New York, New York Sep 2015 - Aug 2018

- Led on-the-ground coverage of massive apartment fire, which garnered [full Sunday spread](#) in San Antonio Express-News
- Served as sports editor, led the service journalism "Spectrum" brand and managed a team of ~30 developers and designers as Head of Product at the Columbia Daily Spectator

REFERENCES

Tessa Duvall & Rick Green, politics & public affairs editor, executive editor

email: tduvall@herald-leader.com & rgreen@herald-leader.com

phone: (270) 535-4379 & (513) 532-8783

Luis Clemens, former deputy managing editor & senior editor for diversity at NPR

email: luiscllemens1111@gmail.com

phone: (202) 657-3678

Steve Stewart, former publisher of The State Journal, current President and CEO of Boone Newsmedia

email: steve.stewart@boonenewsmedia.com

phone: (502)-227-4556

SKILLS, INTERESTS, AND AFFILIATIONS

Languages: Fluent in written Spanish with limited speaking proficiency

Service: Board Secretary, Fresh Start Frankfort; Treasurer of HOA; Co-Director, Kentucky Open Government Coalition

Interests: Playing music for bluegrass & rock bands, basketball, reading/writing fiction, film