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EIU Names Ray Long, Dave McKinney Journalists of the Year

Apr-24-2009

Ray Long of the Chicago Tribune and Dave McKinney of the Chicago Sun-Times have been named Journalists of the Year by the Eastern Illinois University Journalism Department.

Long and McKinney, Springfield bureau chiefs of their respective newspapers, will be honored Saturday, April 25, during the 50th annual Journalism/Student Media Banquet at the Grand Ballroom of the MLK Jr. Union on the EIU campus.

"Long and McKinney have had impressive careers covering state government and are deserving of the honor," said James Tidwell, department chairman.

The journalism faculty selected the two veteran reporters for induction into the Journalism Department's Hall of Fame for making an outstanding contribution to the field of journalism in the EIU service region.



Ray Long



Dave McKinney

"Both reporters are exceptional reporters and their coverage of the rise and fall of Gov. Rod Blagojevich was exemplary," said John Ryan, chair of the Journalism Department's Outreach and Service Committee, which makes the selection. "Long and his colleagues were leaders in breaking the arrest and indictment of Gov. Blagojevich and McKinney has led the state on coverage of Roland Burris' appointment to fill the U.S. Senate seat formerly held by President Obama."

In addition, Ryan said, the two reporters have done an outstanding job of covering the state capital.

Long, 51, has covered major legislative issues under five governors. He has been a reporter in the Chicago Tribune's Capitol bureau since February 1998. He previously ran the Associated Press bureau in Springfield. He also covered Mayor Richard M. Daley, Chicago City Hall, Cook County Board, courts and state government for the Chicago

Sun-Times.

He is a graduate of the public affairs reporting program at Sangamon State University, now the University of Illinois at Springfield, where he is a member of that program's hall of fame. A Winchester native, he began his reporting career at the Peoria Journal-Star.

Long is married to Peggy Boyer, the former executive editor of Illinois Issues magazine and former bureau chief of WUIS-FM, the flagship of the Illinois public radio network. They reside in Springfield.

McKinney, 44, has been Springfield bureau chief for the Chicago Sun-Times since 1995. Before that, he was a government and general assignment reporter at the Daily Herald of Arlington Heights, where he began his career after graduating from Eastern Illinois University with a journalism degree.

Born in Mattoon, McKinney and his wife, Maureen, are the parents of two children, Matthew, 18, and Laura, 16. Maureen McKinney, also an Eastern journalism graduate, is managing editor of Illinois Issues magazine. They also reside in Springfield.

Long and McKinney are the eighth and ninth individuals to be named Journalists of the Year and be inducted into the EIU Journalism Hall of Fame.

Other inductees include:

- 2008: Madeleine Doubek, managing editor, The Daily Herald, Arlington Heights;
- 2007: Jeff Nelson, retired managing editor, Lincoln (Ill.) Courier;
- 2006: Cam Simpson, former Chicago Tribune reporter and now a reporter for the Wall Street Journal;

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- 2004: John Foreman, editor and publisher, News-Gazette, Champaign-Urbana;
- 2003: Les Brownlee, long-time Chicago newspaper and broadcast journalist;
- 2002: David Shaul, former news director, WCIA (Channel 3) in Champaign; and
- 2001: William Hamel, retired publisher, Times-Courier and Journal Gazette, Charleston-Mattoon.