



Claire Sisun



Hsing Tseng

Journalism Studies Students Shift from the Classroom to the Courtroom: Covering the Aurora Theater Shooting Trial

by Connor W. Davis, junior Journalism Studies major

The ongoing legal trial for James Holmes' [mass shooting inside an Aurora, Colorado movie theater](#) is top news across the entire nation and is being covered from many different angles. Two of these reporting angles come from MFJS students - Hsing Tseng, senior Journalism Studies and Asian Studies double major from Estes Park, Co., and Denver local Claire Sisun, junior Journalism Studies major and Spanish minor.

Tseng has been covering the theater shooting trial as an intern for [KDVR.com/FOX31 Denver](#), and gained vast knowledge from the unique reporting opportunity.

“Court reporting is very different from regular reporting because it's not just about reporting the facts, it's about understanding the processes of law and the nuances that dictate how the lawyers on both side proceed,” said Tseng.

Though she never expected to be in this field of work, she is embracing being a part of something many Coloradans, and others around the world, are heavily interested in.

“I honestly haven't really been interested in court reporting before, but like many other Coloradans, I was interested in staying informed about the theater shooting trial. I've always

been interested in online journalism as I believe that's where reporting is headed," said Tseng.

This internship opportunity led to a full-time position with FOX31 Denver for Tseng.

"I was just hired as a Digital Content Producer for the station, which includes KWGN Channel 2 and KDVR FOX31 Denver," said Tseng. "I love working with the web staff and think I have a lot to learn and grow in the coming years."

Sisun was an intern for the [Aurora Sentinel](#) from February through April 2015, during which time she reported on the trial's jury selection. Through this internship, she learned the ropes of reporting in the courtroom and, like Tseng, sparked an interest in courtroom coverage.

"I had never done anything related to court before," said Sisun. "I thought I wanted to be a food writer or blogger. Now, it's really interesting to me and I wouldn't want to stop doing it."

After Sisun's time at the *Sentinel*, she secured an internship with Denver-based news source [9NEWS](#), where she continues to report primarily on the theater shooting trial. Since she was a little girl, it has been Sisun's dream to work in broadcast journalism. She sees how her time at DU, internship work at the *Sentinel*, and assignment to report on a major news event created visibility for her and led to more opportunities.

"I'm just excited to be young and to have a future in journalism," said Sisun. "Now I can see that there are jobs in the field and that I can do this. DU was great at providing me with connections and opportunities to get these internships. The managing editor at the *Sentinel* saw that I went to DU and immediately told me that DU students are great."

From her dreams as a child to her interest in food writing to her budding career in the courtroom, Sisun says the main thing she's learned is to remain open to new opportunities.

"Go for everything. I applied for an internship at [Eater](#) and some other food-related [opportunities] that I didn't get, and then I applied for the *Sentinel* on a whim and got it. So don't limit yourself, because you never know what can happen."