

## MEGAN E. CHAO

Documentary Producer, Picture Editor and Part-Time Lecturer at USC Annenberg

### CREDITS

- 2025 – present**    **EXECUTIVE PRODUCER (SHOWRUNNER), EDITOR.** *The Chefs of Skid Row (wt).* In pre-production with Los Angeles Community Action Network.
- 2024 – present**    **EXECUTIVE PRODUCER (SHOWRUNNER), EDITOR.** *Earth Focus*, Seasons 6 and 7. Award-winning environmental documentary series that explores the intersection between urban and nature. Season 6 airing now (Q2 2025), Season 7 currently in post production, broadcast Q2 2026. PBS SoCal / PBS / PBS+.
- 2020 – present**    **EXECUTIVE PRODUCER (SHOWRUNNER), EDITOR.** *Eden* (working title). With exclusive access to a recently formed interdisciplinary science team, this innovative multi-platform environmental science series tackles planetary issues with groundbreaking methodologies. In production, with partners Microsoft, NVIDIA, CERN and Alice + Smith.
- 2019 – 2020**        **SUPERVISING PRODUCER, EDITOR.** *Saint Patrick's Greatest Gift.* Pilot episode for a historical documentary series based on the NYT bestselling book series by Thomas Cahill, *The Hinges of History.* CuriosityStream.
- 2018 – present**    **SERIES PRODUCER, SERIES EDITOR, ONLINE EDITOR.** *Impact.* An award-winning documentary series featuring more than 400 stories from around the world. 89 episodes over seven seasons broadcast weekly on Spectrum News 1 in Los Angeles, with national distribution through Spectrum Networks/Charter Communications to more than 30 million viewers. *Season 8 currently in production.*
- 2011 – 2020**        **SUPERVISING PRODUCER, EDITED BY.** *Murder to Mercy: The Cyntoia Brown Story.* A feature documentary that presents a comprehensive look at the case of Cyntoia Brown, a Tennessee juvenile who received a life sentence at the age of 16 for murder. Because of familial reveals, legislative and clemency efforts, she was released early from prison at the age of 30. Netflix Original Documentary, Top 10 for the first two weeks of release.
- 2018 – 2019**        **PRODUCER, EDITOR.** *Life on the Line: EMS 50<sup>th</sup>.* A documentary short that explores the 50 year history of the Los Angeles County Fire Department's paramedic program.
- 2017 – 2018**        **PRODUCER, EDITOR.** *The Earliest Americans.* A new discovery from paleontologists and archaeologists from the San Diego Natural History Museum challenges existing theories about who the first Americans were and when they got here. CuriosityStream/MAX.
- 2016 – 2017**        **PRODUCER, EDITOR.** *Sentencing Children.* A web series continuation of the acclaimed documentary, *Me Facing Life: Cyntoia's Story*, as a legal team takes on juvenile justice reform in the state of Tennessee. ITVS – Independent Lens and *The Tennessean.* Runner-up for a Webby Award in the documentary series category.
- 2016 – 2017**        **PRODUCER, EDITOR.** *The Hunt for Dark Matter.* A documentary that follows a team of scientists who are developing new technology to find dark matter. CuriosityStream.
- 2015 – 2016**        **PRODUCER, EDITOR.** *Curious Minds: Conscious Capitalism.* A documentary special about a new movement in capitalism and its effects on society. CuriosityStream.
- 2012 – 2015**        **CONTRIBUTING PRODUCER.** *Big Bang Machine.* A documentary about the discovery of the elusive Higgs Boson particle at CERN. PBS | NOVA.

- 2013 – 2014**     **PRODUCER, EDITOR, ADD’L CINEMATOGRAPHY.** *Perfecting Flight: Bob Hoover.* Feature documentary about the legendary aviator. Narrated and executive produced by Harrison Ford. Premiere at Paramount Studios. Won a Bronze Telly Award.
- 2012 – 2014**     **CONSULTING EDITOR.** *Bite Size.* Feature documentary that looks at the nation’s childhood obesity epidemic. Theatrical and film festival run.
- 2011 – 2012**     **PRODUCER, EDITOR, ADD’L CINEMATOGRAPHY.** *Chasing Speed: Leslie Porterfield.* Documentary about Leslie Porterfield, the world’s fastest woman on a motorcycle and her quest for more speed. Won two Silver Telly Awards. Discovery | Velocity.
- 2011 – 2012**     **DIRECTOR, CINEMATOGRAPHER.** *Go Public: A Day in the Life of PASD.* Feature documentary about a day in the Pasadena Unified School District. PBS and film festivals.
- 2009 – 2011**     **PRODUCTION COORDINATOR, RESEARCHER.** *Me Facing Life: Cyntoia’s Story.* Award-winning documentary about Cyntoia Brown, a Tennessee youth who committed murder at the age of 16 and is now serving life in prison. PBS | Independent Lens, distributed internationally by The Cinema Guild. Was part of the ITVS Community Cinema Program and the Women and Girls Lead campaign. Adapted into curricula for the Girl Scouts.
- 2009 – 2010**     **RESEARCHER.** *Brace for Impact: The Chesley B. Sullenberger Story.* Documentary about the pilot of US Airways Flight 1549 and his historic landing on the Hudson River in 2009. Narrated by Harrison Ford. TLC and Discovery Channel.

## RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

- 2015 – present**     **VICE PRESIDENT – DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCTION, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER (SHOWRUNNER) AND PICTURE EDITOR, Daniel H. Birman Productions, Inc.**
- 2012 – 2015**     **PRODUCER AND EDITOR, Daniel H. Birman Productions, Inc.**
- 2009 – 2011**     **RESEARCHER & PRODUCTION COORDINATOR, Daniel H. Birman Productions, Inc.**
- 2008 – 2009**     **PROGRAM COORDINATOR, USC Annenberg / California Endowment Health Journalism Fellowships Program.**
- 2007 – 2008**     **NEWS PRODUCTION ASSISTANT, KNX 1070 News Radio (CBS Radio).** Collected and edited sound for air and conducted phone interviews for anchors. Wrote articles for the website. Assisted team coverage for the 2007 Malibu fires.
- 2007**     **LEAD REPORTER, The National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine / Keck Futures Initiative on Human Healthspan.** Served as lead mentor and writer to science writing students. Published keynote article in The National Academies magazine, *In Focus.*
- 2006**     **REPORTER, The National Academies of Science, Medicine and Engineering / Keck Futures Initiative on Smart Prosthetics.**

## ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- 2022 – present**     **PART-TIME LECTURER, University of Southern California, Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism.** Faculty adviser, series producer and online editor for *Impact*, the award-winning documentary series, which airs weekly on Spectrum News 1,

the first 24/7 news channel in southern California, and nationally via Spectrum Networks / Charter Communications. Regular contributor, guest lecturer and overload instructor for Dan Birman's JOUR 405, 503, 521 and 522 classes.

**2011 – 2022**      **ADJUNCT FACULTY, University of Southern California, Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism.**

**2010 – 2011**      **BROADCAST PRODUCTION COACH, University of Southern California, Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism.**

### **ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT**

**2008**              **MASTER OF ARTS, Broadcast Journalism  
University of Southern California**

**2006**              **BACHELOR OF SCIENCE, Biology  
BACHELOR OF ARTS, Creative Writing, Emphasis in Nonfiction  
University of California at Riverside**

### **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

**2025 – present**      **BOARD OF DIRECTORS, National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences (NATAS).** Member of the Membership and National Awards Committees.

**2024 – present**      **CHAIR, USC Asian Pacific Islander Faculty and Staff Association (APIFSA).**

**2024 – present**      **ADVISORY BOARD, Archival Producers Alliance (APA).** Initiative for Generative AI in Documentary Filmmaking.

**2023 – present**      **CO-CHAIR – DOCUMENTARY AND NONFICTION COMMITTEE, Producers Guild of America.**

**2023 – present**      **BOARD OF GOVERNORS – DOCUMENTARY PROGRAMMING, Television Academy.** Co-Chair of the Activities Committee (2024-2026), and elected member of the Emmy Awards Committee (2024-2025). Member of the Bylaws Committee and AI Task Force. Chair of the Generative AI Impact on Emmy Rules Ad Hoc Group.

**2022 – present**      **PRODUCER'S COUNCIL MEMBER, Producers Guild of America.** Member of the AAPI Working Group and the Documentary and Nonfiction Committee.

**2022**                **TELEVISION ACADEMY HONORS, Selection Committee, Television Academy.**

**2021 – 2023**        **VICE CHAIR – CURRICULUM COMMITTEE + MEMBER – COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE, USC Asian Pacific Islander Faculty and Staff Association (APIFSA).**

**2019 – 2022**        **PEER GROUP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – DOCUMENTARY PROGRAMMING, Television Academy.**

**2018 – 2020**        **BOARD MEMBER, USC Alumni Club of Los Angeles.** Vice President of Marketing.

**2011 – present**      **HYPHENATE NATIONAL ACTIVE MEMBER – DOCUMENTARY PROGRAMMING and PICTURE EDITORS PEER GROUPS, Television Academy.**

2010 – 2011      **ASSOCIATE MEMBER – DOCUMENTARY PROGRAMMING, Television Academy.**

2008 – present    **MEMBER, International Documentary Association.**  
**MEMBER, Asian American Journalists Association.**

## **OTHER PUBLICATIONS + SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS**

- 2024              **GUEST LECTURE** on documentary as a craft and journalistic practice. USC Annenberg for Diane Winston’s JOUR 589 course.
- 2024              **PANEL MODERATOR, Producers Guild of America. *Riding the Wave of Nonfiction Sports Programming.*** A conversation with Libby Geist (President, Words + Pictures), Adam Golberg (Executive Producer, *The One in November*), Matt Hamachek (Executive Producer/Director, *The Dynasty: New England Patriots*), and Lee White (Head of WME Sports Content Division).
- 2024              **ARTICLE, National Association for Broadcasters (NAB) 2024: [Q&A Series: Megan Chao on Where AI Fits into Documentaries](#)**
- 2024              **PANELIST, National Association for Broadcasters (NAB) 2024: [Extra! Extra! The People vs. AI vs. Creativity.](#)** Get ready to witness the trial of the century as AI faces charges for Conspiracy to Conformity in Content Creation. Megan Chao and Mahmoud Al-Ken (Senior Producer, Al Jazeera) on prosecution, Irad Eyal (Founder, Quickture and Haymaker West) on defense, with Matt Hanna presiding as judge.
- 2024              **PANELIST, National Association for Broadcasters (NAB) 2024: [Unscripted Evolution: How AI is shaping Reality TV and Documentaries.](#)** Andy Beach (CTO, Microsoft), Irad Eyal (Founder, Quickture and Haymaker West), Oz Krakowski (Chief Business Development Officer, Deepdub), and Megan Chao, moderated by Lori Schwartz.
- 2024              **MODERATOR, [APIFSA Industry and Identity Series: A Conversation with Amrita Dhaliwal,](#)** an award-winning Punjabi American comedian, arts leader, educator and devising artist whose work spans from stage to television and film.
- 2024              **PANEL MODERATOR, Television Academy. [The Craft of Documentary: The Role of the Archival Producer.](#)**
- 2024              **PANEL MODERATOR, Producers Guild of America. *The State of Generative AI in Nonfiction Programs.*** A conversation with Rachel Antell and Stephanie Jenkins of the Archival Producers Alliance, Kate Crawford of USC Annenberg, and Jonathan Segal of Davis Wright Tremaine LLP.
- 2023              **PANELIST, National Association for Broadcasters (NAB) 2023: *A Production Model for Sustainability: Media and Tech Come Together.*** Megan Chao and Jimmy Parker-Barratt from Microsoft discuss their unique new partnership for a sustainability documentary series.
- 2022              **PANEL MODERATOR AND HOST, *What’s in a Name?: Exploring Identities, Allyship and Cross-Racial Relations.*** USC APIFSA and MOB explore the complexities of race, identity and representation surrounding the Black and Asian communities. Panelists include Drs. Viet Thanh Nguyen, Adrian De Leon, Sarah Townsend, and Erika V. Hall.
- 2021              **GUEST LECTURE** on the craft of documentary. USC Annenberg for Sasha Anawalt’s arts journalism class.

- 2019**            **GUEST LECTURE** on documentary as a powerful medium for visual storytelling. USC Annenberg for Doe Mayer's CMGT 588 course.
- 2018**            **CONSULTING PRODUCER, EDITOR**, Land and Water Conservation Fund awareness campaign to prevent the discontinuation of a federal program that pays for green spaces and national parks. Series of six videos for The Wilderness Society.
- 2015**            **SUPERVISING PRODUCER, EDITOR**, BYD's Electric Bus program, highlighting the world's largest manufacturer of batteries and the EV market. Make Over Earth, Inc.
- 2015**            **SUPERVISING PRODUCER, ONLINE EDITOR**, *How KPCC worked to grow its Latino audience in Los Angeles*. Video that explores a case study by the Latino Public Radio Consortium. Current.org.
- 2012**            **PRODUCER, EDITOR**, City of Riverside Electric Vehicle Outreach program. Web series about EV initiatives in a region challenged with air pollution. Make Over Earth, Inc.
- 2011**            **GUEST LECTURE** on documentary as a form of journalism. Santa Monica College and Glendale Community College for Sharyn Obsatz's intro to journalism classes.
- 2008**            **AUTHOR**, *Aging, Longevity and 'Healthspan'*, The National Academies of Science, Medicine and Engineering's joint publication, *In Focus* magazine.
- 2008**            **KEYNOTE AUTHOR**, *The Future of Human Healthspan: Demography, Evolution, Medicine and Bioengineering*, The National Academies of Science, Medicine and Engineering.
- 2007**            **AUTHOR**, *Brain Interfacing with Materials: Recording and Stimulation Electrodes*, The National Academies of Science, Medicine and Engineering.
- 2005**            **CONTRIBUTING AUTHOR**, *An Identity Twice Found: An Autobiography, American Identities: California Short Stories of Multiple Ancestries*. Edited with an introduction by Dr. Eliud Martinez.