Arvada West HS

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In a time when the press has been relentlessly attacked and called “the enemy of the American people” by the President, student journalists are more important than ever.

A passion for journalism was palpable in the Old Supreme Court Chambers as 80 students from 18 schools gathered for the annual Colorado Student Media Association’s Capitol Hill Press Conference. Students’ questions ranged from LGBT rights to immigrant student protections to standardized testing to teen suicide rates in Colorado.

Student journalists are well aware of the recent attacks from the Trump administration. As I begin to think about my future, the college I will attend, and the career I will pursue, journalism comes to mind more often than not.

I had been skeptical of becoming a journalist in the past, realizing that my introverted tendencies could make journalism a nerve-wracking career. However, President Trump’s attacks on the media and the epidemic of “fake news” have inspired me even more to become a journalist.

As House Representative Paul Lundeen said, “The media is critical to the future of our republican form of government. It is only by having accurate information that individuals can make informed decisions. We cannot survive as a [. . .] nation without an accurate media.”

Each guest speaker began their Q and A session by thanking the student journalists and encouraging us to continue pursuing journalism as a career.

As students fearlessly addressed tough issues, it became clear that a passion for journalism is alive and well. Students were engaged and excited when they were called on to ask questions and their questions were thoughtful and well researched.

Citing Walter Cronkite, Lieutenant Governor Donna Lynne said, “Freedom of the press is not just important to democracy, it is democracy.”

Though our President may attack us and criticize us, we journalists will continue to search relentlessly for the truth with passion and courage.