

Sid Balman Jr.
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Writer In Residence at Sul Ross State University, Pulitzer-nominated national security correspondent and awarded author, Sid Balman Jr. has covered wars and conflict in the Persian Gulf, Somalia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo and Rwanda, and has traveled extensively with two American presidents and four secretaries of state on overseas diplomatic missions. With the emergence of the web and the commoditizing of content, Balman moved into the business side of communications. In that role, over two decades, he helped found a news syndicate focused on the interests of women and girls, served as communications chief for the largest consortium of U.S. international development organizations, led two successful progressive campaigning companies, and launched a new division at a large international development firm centered on violent radicalism and other security issues on behalf of governments and nonprofits. He has been a visiting professor of communications at American University, and helped establish a journalism program in the DC Public School system. Balman is a fourth-generation Texan, as well as a climber, surfer, paddler, and benefactor to Smith College.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Writer in Residence and Professor at Sul Ross State University** 2020-present
- Teach Journalism, Creative Writing and Communications courses.
 - Advise student newspaper
 - Help establish Sul Ross as a literary and arts hub in the American Southwest
- Author and Journalist** 2017-present
- *Author Murmuration*
 - Second novel in the Seventh Flag series, sharing similar themes and geographies with the original novel, but focusing on the Somali diaspora to Minnesota and white supremacy.
 - *Author Seventh Flag*
 - Historical fiction tracing the arc of radicalization in American and Europe from World War II to the present day through four generations of two families in a small west Texas town: – one prosperous farmers and the other Syrian Muslim immigrants. Publication date Oct. 2019. sidbalman.com
 - Nominated for numerous awards, to be announced in 2020:
 - Independent Book Publishers Association award for Best New Voice, Fiction; Best Historical Fiction
 - Readers’ Favorite National Book Award
 - Border Regional Library Association Southwest Book Award
 - Foreward Indies Award
 - National Indie Excellence Award
 - Independent Book Publisher’s Award
 - *Contributor to numerous publications, including Outside Magazine and newspaper editorial pages*
- Sul Ross University, Alpine, TX** 2020-present
Visiting professor in the Department of Fine Arts and Communications
- Teach Journalism, Communications and Creative Writing
- Creative Associates International, Washington, DC**
Director Transnational Initiatives; Countering Violent Extremism Director Policy and Strategic/Change Communications 2016 -2018
- Lead the development of a new practice at Creative Associates, a 40-year-old company currently implementing projects in 36 countries, focusing on issues that have both domestic and international relevance for predominantly government clients, such as migration, violent radicalism, terrorism, crime and violence prevention, and at-risk youth. Successful new business acquisition and partnerships with the United Kingdom, Pakistan, the United States, the United Nations and the European Union.
 - Lead CVE policy and strategic/change communications projects -- including alternative content, community engagement and campaigns -- for the largest division at Creative, Communities in Transition.
 - Support projects to develop diagnostic tools that analyze community resiliency, gauge public opinion both online and offline, devise “Redirect” methodologies and map hot spots of potential violence through a public health lens -- key factors in determining the “push and pull” factors for violence, crime, terrorism and youth delinquency.
 - Lead the development of projects that connect diagnostics to programs that build local capacity for assessing community risk to violent radicalism and for designing mitigating activities

- Work with the Development Lab to design and implement programmatic data analytics, digital strategies and artificial intelligence
- Serve on the CVE Steering Committee
- In the US and abroad, lead outreach to the media; governments, social/tech sector; and civil society to build Creative Associates thought leadership and brand in a way that complements corporate strategies.
- Active US security clearance

TURNER4D, Washington, DC; Zurich, Switzerland; Denver, Colo; Omaha, Neb.

Managing Director

2012-2016

Engaged by ownership to help rebrand and turn-around a 16-year-old, woman-owned communications firm, and to develop an international issue campaigning practice driven by data, integrated social media/earned media and analytics.

- Rebranded Turner Strategies -- a traditional public relations agency -- as turner4D and built it into a leading campaigning, strategy and communications firm in the areas of advocacy, digital, social, content, tools and analytics. Developed new practice areas in international development, global health, web and information literacy, countering violent extremism, education and counter-trafficking.
- Increased revenues by a factor of 10; tripled the staff; opened new offices in Zurich and Denver; and established a partnership with Celinda Lake and Lake Research Partners, a leading opinion research firm that provided the capacity to build campaigns from sophisticated, targeted opinion research. Clients included Mozilla, The Wilderness Society, the YWCA, InterAction, Harvard University, the U.S. Agency for International Development and a coalition of foundations that underwrote a racial justice campaign in Texas.
- Built a digital staff and worked with them to develop new methodologies for opinion and sentiment research that employed such methods as A/B testing on social media platforms to gauge the intensity of opinion through engagement metrics.
- On behalf of a coalition that included the Vatican as well several nations in the Middle East and Western Europe, led the development of a training curriculum to help community leaders in Asia, the Middle East and Africa to detect and mitigate extremist activity. This program, which has been adopted by other governments, NGOs and city councils in regions with large, at-risk diaspora communities -- such as Minneapolis and Birmingham, England -- relies on a digital Early Warning System developed by Turner.
- Developed a methodology for media firms and other content-driven organizations to enhance online engagement and increase subscriptions by employing tools that identify trending narratives in social media that may be of interest for their key audiences. Worked with these clients on story selection, and customized analytics dashboards to measure effectiveness.
- Developed a profitable content licensing program for Turner's feminist blog/community, fem2.0, one of the largest aggregators of feminist content in the world.
- Keynote speaker World Campaigning Forum 2015 in Zurich, Switzerland.

BOOZ ALLEN HAMILTON, Washington, DC

Senior Executive

2010-2011

Booz Allen acquired my firm, the Balman Group, to help build its international practice.

- Developed and implemented market-entry strategies for global health, United Nations and European Community funded international development.

THE BALMAN GROUP, Washington, DC and Zurich Switzerland

Founder and CEO

2005-2010

Building on experience in international development and global health, developed an international campaigning, strategy and communications firm. Additionally, the firm worked with major US foundations and international corporations on issues related to domestic health, labor, the environment, international peace and security, immigration and gender.

- Assisted in the development and launch of the ONE Campaign, the Irish musician Bono's effort to fight global poverty.
- Worked with the US Agency for International Development and several humanitarian groups on strategy, communications and resource development issues around response to disasters in Pakistan, Haiti, and New Orleans; and with the Department of Defense on domestic preparedness for disease outbreak.
- Assisted in the development and launch of the Healthcare Improvement Foundation, which advocates for reform and clinical advancement in the Delaware Valley.
- Negotiated acquisition by Booz Allen Hamilton

REEL VIDEO, Washington, DC

2009

Founder and President

Established a non-profit to help under-resourced inner city high school athletes negotiate the recruiting process and market themselves for college scholarships through video highlight reels and other methods not available to them.

INTERACTION, Washington, DC 2001-2005
Chief of Strategic Communications, Spokesman and principal advisor to the CEO/Board
 As part of the senior team, helped led strategic communications, advocacy and policy for the largest US alliance of overseas relief and development groups.

- Working with the United Nations assisted in the advancement of the Millennium Development Goals campaigns, including the Global Partnership for Effective Assistance, which resulted in the largest increase of US foreign aid since the Marshall Plan to rebuild Europe following World War II.
- Assisted in the design and implementation of a program to help foster better civil-military relations between US forces and American aid groups, which included production of an award-winning documentary filmed in the Balkans, and a series of private negotiations between civil and military leaders.
- Working in the US and overseas, served as a spokesman and advisor on strategic communications as well as advocacy to Interaction members involved with wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Darfur, Sudan; and the Tsunami in Southeast Asia.
- Reorganized Interaction’s publishing division, which resulted in an 80-percent increase in sales and a 30 percent decrease in expenses.

WOMENS NEWS LINK, Washington, DC 2000-2001
Founding Editor and Principal
 Responsible for all editorial aspects of creating an international, Internet-based, multi-media news syndicate reporting on issues of concern to women and girls.

- Identified potential investors and participated in fund-raising; helped develop and execute business and marketing plan.
- Built and managed a network of adult and teen “E-lancers” in the United States and abroad, as well as a Washington-based staff of full and part-time employees.
- Working with a software design team, oversaw development of an early version of an XML-based authoring, editing and publishing system to for the delivery of multimedia content.

United Press International, Washington, DC 1990-2000
 Diplomatic and National Security Correspondent
 Responsible for covering and organizing coverage of all major international stories.

- Traveled with secretaries of State Baker, Eagleburger, Christopher and Albright; and with Presidents Bush and Clinton on all overseas trips.
- Covered wars and conflict in Iraq, Somalia, Lebanon, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo and Rwanda.
- UPI’s representative on the Pentagon’s National Press Pool.
- Pulitzer nominee for coverage of the Balkan Wars.

Reporter 1986-1990

- Crime and General Assignment; Dallas Times Herald
- Military Hardware and Tactics; Times Journal Publishing

EDUCATION

Cornell University 1991
 Business/Continuing Education

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY 1988-1989
 Masters of Arts Journalism and Public Affairs

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY 1978-1982
 Bachelor of Science, English; minor in Business

ST. MARKS SCHOOL OF TEXAS 1965-1977

ADDITIONAL

- Certified Wilderness First Responder
- American Alpine Club Board of Directors; Resource Development Committee
- Visiting Professor of Communications American University
- Member Vanderbilt Football and Rugby Team
- Colorado River Guide
- In memory of Patricia Papert-Balman, Smith College 1953, and Sidney Balman, created two endowments in 1997 to assist deserving students at Smith College.