

## **Sara Ganim Inspires Future Journalists at Foster Conference**

Pulitzer Prize recipient Sara Ganim spoke to an engaged audience on Tuesday evening about what she has learned since first reporting the grand jury investigation of Jerry Sandusky in March 2011.

Ganim was one of two keynote speakers at The Foster-Foreman Conference of Distinguished Writers, which was held in Penn State's HUB-Robeson Center.

Students and faculty members gathered to hear about Ganim's journey since graduating Penn State with a journalism degree in 2008. Ganim, 25, began working at *The Centre Daily Times* immediately upon graduating, and then continued her career at *The Patriot-News* of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Ganim became one of the youngest recipients, at age 24, to win the Pulitzer Prize for Local Reporting. She is the second Penn State graduate to receive the award under the age of 30.

After being the only reporter to actively pursue the story for over 18 months, Ganim released a story on March 31, 2011, that a grand jury was investigating former Penn State employee Jerry Sandusky for allegations that he assaulted a teenage boy.

On Tuesday evening, Ganim discussed the journey she has been on since breaking the story. She discussed several different things that she's learned about journalism along the way.

"I'm going to tell you 5 things I've learned," Ganim said.

Ganim discussed how it really matters who you work for, and when and how to use social media websites. She also informed the audience that people will lie to you, and

it's important to always "move your story forward." Her final piece of advice to the audience was to "lie on your time-card."

"Sometimes you have to work on a Saturday. It isn't a 9-to-5 job. If you don't love it, don't do it. I love what I do, and I want to do it. I have a good time doing it because I know that the work I do is good," Ganim added.

Several students stated that they took a lot from Ganim's lecture.

"I like how Ganim admitted she still gets nervous talking to the victims and the families of Jerry Sandusky," Lauren Poletsky, 20, admitted. Ganim talked about how the gut-feeling never goes away before she interviews families, but she is often surprised at how much people want to talk to her and share their side of the story.

Pat Ackerman, 20, admired that Ganim has accomplished so much and at such a young age. "She first found out about Sandusky by simply asking around when she was only a few years older than I am now," Ackerman said. "It's crazy that she has received all these awards and she just graduated a few years ago."

Ganim has also received a George Polk Award for Journalism, a Distinguished Writing Award from the American Society of News Editors, and a Scripps Howard Award for Community Journalism. *Newsweek* Magazine also recognized her as one of "150 Fearless Women in the World."

As accomplished as Ganim has become thus far in her career, she recognizes she still has some learning to do in order to become a better reporter. "I still make a lot of mistakes. You can't be perfect at this," Ganim admitted.