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# MIZZOU

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## Distributing the Basketball

**Mizzou alumna wins the Mel Greenberg Award for her women's basketball coverage.**

*Story by Marcus Wilkins*

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**L**ike every passionate sports writer, Vicki L. Friedman, MA '90, caught the bug as a fan. But a bit of good fortune helped make her the nationally respected women's basketball reporter she is today.

In year two of a 15-year stint at the *Virginian-Pilot*, the Old Dominion Lady Monarchs surged to the 1997 national title game with Friedman chronicling the run. She rode the local hype to transform the beat into statewide women's hoops coverage.

Now, as an acclaimed freelancer and author of the blog LadySwish, which also covers women's basketball across the commonwealth, she has a Mel Greenberg Media Award.

“It’s my Pulitzer,” says Friedman of the annual national award for the sport’s media. “Writing about women’s basketball has become so important to me, and when you get out of traditional newspaper writing, you’re not sure you are going to have an outlet.”



Photo courtesy of Vicki L. Friedman

As a Washington, D.C. native and a lifelong Redskins enthusiast, Friedman jokes that she has kept her professional distance from the NFL team in order to maintain a proper fan-franchise relationship.

Covering women’s basketball, however, is a full-time cause. LadySwish reports on all 13 Division I basketball teams in Virginia as well as high school recruiting. For her freelance work, Friedman received a 2008 Associated Press Sports Editors Award for a feature story about a player whose father was dying from Lou Gehrig’s disease.

“Even when I write for my blog, I prefer to sit in the stands,” Friedman says. “Too often sports writers just sit in the press box and have things fed to them — and not just literally.”

Friedman, who also works in public relations with a local community college, lives in Chesapeake, Va.,

with husband Mike, BJ '85, and sons Ben and Harry. Her teenage boys consistently surprise mom with their women's basketball knowledge.

“It's still a pretty niche sport, but I don't hold it against anybody,” Friedman says. “The reason it's not popular is because women don't watch it. I'd love to see it grow.”

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