

Interview of Anthony Pittore, Independent Writer, Producer and Editor, by current FTVM student Aline Lino.

Aline Lino: Can you tell us a little about yourself and when you first found yourself interested in media production?

Anthony Pittore: I'm a Navy veteran, dad of 2, and lifelong movie freak. I couldn't possibly remember the first time I knew I wanted to work in movies, I've been telling my family I wanted to make them since I was a kid. There was never anything else I wanted to do.

AL: What first attracted you to taking Media Production classes and how did you choose to take classes at GCC and FTVM?

AP: I've had a bit of a strange path. I started out in the military because I had always promised my family I would (family traditions and all). That world wasn't for me, but I had some amazing experiences and leveraged those experiences into jobs as a script consultant on military & intel-themed movies, especially those about the NSA (where I worked while in the Navy).

Once I had a secure job through consulting, I moved out to LA (Glendale specifically). I had my GI Bill, which means the government was willing to pay for me to go to school. Since I already have a separate degree, I wanted to get more hands-on and technical training.

I chose GCC because it was the closest to my house. *HOWEVER*, I stuck around and took whatever classes I could in the department because of the incredible professors I had, like Deb Diehl & Geri Ulrey. I have recommended them to everyone looking to learn from people with passion.

AL: Did you know what career you wanted to have? If your ideas about your career have changed, how?

AP: Movies were always the thing. However, once I started studying in the Media dep't at GCC, I got to experience a couple different elements of the industry and have now been working outside of my original path. For instance, after taking a couple of TV courses with Geri, I started writing my own TV scripts, one of which is currently a finalist in a fellowship with WarnerMedia & HBO. Within a few months after taking an editing course with Deb, I was hired to edit a couple of short films and have edited my own work as well. My next project is shooting in Maryland this fall!

I also ran haunted houses (the Halloween kind) and was a professional poker player for a few years, but I still do both of those on the side because they're just too fun to quit. This also goes to show you don't have to always settle for one thing.

AL: What is the position you have now and how did you get it?

AP: As most industry folk do, I wear a few different hats. I still consult on projects as a subject matter expert in military, intel, etc. I was invited to return to help mentor with the Writers Guild's fellowship that I previously completed. I also work as a judge for a few different screenwriting contests & festivals. All of this outside writing/producing now that the world is reopen more to production.

AL: What do you enjoy about the position?

AP: After being raised by military parents and being in the military myself... I love the freedom of what I do. Being able to work in different areas of film & TV means I can always find a fit or even just offer a way to help if someone needs a hand. I've stepped in a couple times to help out on productions when a crewmember falls through. Things I learned at GCC and since have helped me fill a lot of the cracks of my knowledge.

AL: *What do you wish was different?*

AP: The only things I'd change are based on time. I wish the industry didn't have the last two years of stagnation and I wish a lot of talented people didn't have to lose work. If I can do my part to help turn the gears of production, I'll do it.

AL: *What hard skills (applications, Technical) do you think it takes to do your job well?*

AP: The primary technical skills I've used from GCC are editing (on premiere), SFX on After Effects, sound design through apps like Audition and Audacity, etc. Also, even something as simple as how to wrap a cord (THANK YOU, GERI!) to help out your crew members who might be otherwise busy.

I'm currently putting together a project (as producer), and I've noticed my interviews with DPs/cinematographers, sound designers, and even actors have improved because I have the technical knowledge that most producers don't, thanks to my classes there.

AL: *What personality traits (soft skills) do you think it takes to do your job well?*

AP: I'm an analyst at heart. That's what I did in the Navy (Cryptologist and Intel Analyst at the NSA). Therefore, in all of my jobs from editing to producing to writing, I am constantly analyzing situations to improve.

Some people say it's like juggling five chainsaws, but I look at it more like chess. You have to know what each piece does, how it moves, the best way to utilize it. Before GCC, I wouldn't have known how to speak to the knight, who on your film set may be the 1AD. You get taken seriously if you can speak seriously on the subject.

AL: *What advice would you give to students hoping to break into LA's media production community?*

AP: Don't give up. The only people who fail in this industry are the ones that quit. If you truly believe you have the talent and you have others telling you the same, then you just need the time to make it happen. It will be hard, you will want to quit, but that's the only way to lose out here.

Beyond that... just be a decent person. You don't need to be flawlessly nice or a boisterous extrovert to make connections out here. Be kind, be helpful, and be willing to work. You'll find people who will want to work with you.

It's a small industry, but there's room enough for good, talented people who want to work. Be willing to compromise and sacrifice and you'll be just fine.