



It's been just over a year that I have had the opportunity and pleasure of working with Srushti Gangdev, and I can confidently say that her talent as a journalist comes from her ability to genuinely connect with others and tell their stories with diligence and care.

In order to demonstrate how deserving Srushti is of the Shelley Fralic Award, I'd like to take you back to when I first met her and how she has grown personally and professionally over the past year.

As a new publication, getting the Burnaby Beacon up and running has been no easy feat and Srushti immediately demonstrated that she was ready to tackle difficult topics with tenacity as well as compassion.

When we started the Beacon in 2021, the situation around the COVID-19 pandemic was rapidly changing in BC.

Whether she was reaching out to someone who was battling long COVID or covering COVID policy decisions, Srushti has diligently worked to capture the human aspect of the pandemic.

Srushti values quality journalism and demonstrates how important it is to find the truth and report it.

Back in October 2021, there was a serious police incident at a Burnaby mall. Rumours were swirling online that this was an active shooter scenario. Srushti immediately informed me that she was heading down to the mall. She was the first reporter on scene and stayed for a few hours, interviewing witnesses, filming live clips, and providing real-time updates. She was also one of the first journalists to accurately report what happened, helping debunk internet rumours about the incident.

This is one of many instances where Srushti has shown her commitment to reporting the truth as well as her drive and determination to do so.

Srushti also puts her heart into her stories. When she is covering difficult topics –[like the murder of a local teen](#), or [a tragic accident](#)– she is sure to do so with compassion. She is aware that interviewees may be dealing with trauma and approaches her questions in a thoughtful and heartfelt matter. Her journalism is powerful because she genuinely cares about people and it shows in her work.

Srushti is someone I feel I can count on. She always steps in to offer her support, whether it's with a quick edit or covering breaking news. She is an analytical thinker and takes her job extremely seriously, but she never takes *herself* too seriously. Her witty sense of humour and ability to bring laughter to our newsroom are just a few of many reasons why she is so enjoyable to work with.

Although she's still early on in her career, I believe Srushti embodies exactly what Shelley Fralic would value in a journalist: someone who cares deeply about journalism and others around her.

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