

# New reporter David Clarey joins RiverTown team

By Sarah Nigbor

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New RiverTown Multimedia reporter David Clarey started his first day on the job with a bang — literally.

The Carthage, S.D. (home of a straw bale museum, by the way) native was on his way to his first day of work when he was involved in a mild fender bender. But he didn't let that minor detail deter him from jumping into his new assignments with both feet.

Clarey is a member of RT's government, public safety and features

teams, primarily focusing on the Pierce County area, or wherever a good story takes him.

Clarey grew up in a small town with his two brothers, Jon and William, two sisters, Phyllis and Shannon, and his mother, Toni.

Clarey follows his mother's example, evident in the work ethic and drive he's shown since becoming part of the RT team Sept. 12. His



Clarey

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mom runs a restaurant in his hometown.

"She was born in Laos and since coming to America she's worked tremendously hard to care for us as a single mother," Clarey said. "Her work ethic is literally unparalleled; she will work 18-hour days multiple times a week if she has to, and she's done it all so she can provide for us kids."

Clarey graduated from the University of Minnesota - Twin Cities with a degree in Journalism and a minor in cultural studies and comparative literature.

RT enterprise reporter Jackie Renzetti was Clarey's editor at the campus news desk for two semesters. She is inspired by Clarey's attention to detail in community reporting.

"He is great at noticing small details that either help build a story or signify separate, valuable community stories," Renzetti said. "One of my favorite examples is when he met the University of Minnesota's historian while doing research for a different story. After talking with her and learning more about her career, he reported an in-depth profile on her decades at the U and how she's impacted the school."

Clarey's path into journalism began as a way to explore writing as a clear career path.

"Majoring in English or creative writing is a little murky, at least to me, in terms of 'what comes next,' so journalism initially appealed to me in that fashion. Now, I'm obsessed with its principles and ability to do good, in addition to the writing," Clarey said.

Renzetti emphasized Clarey's devotion to watchdog journalism.

"He was arrested once for refusing to leave the scene as he cov-

ered the mass protest following the verdict in the Philando Castile case in June 2017," Renzetti said.

Clarey sees reporting and chronicling events like Castile's public funeral and protests as representative of the current social/cultural moment.

"I think it's important to realize the work reporters do has weight, and covering major events like these has helped me realize that," Clarey said.

Being informed is "incredibly important," he said, and journalism provides many ways to do that.

"It can be a short video on how to register to vote, an infographic on a dense topic or maybe a gripping investigation that forces accountability. When we're informed and trust the information we're receiving we can make better decisions," Clarey said.

Outside of reporting, Clarey reads as much as he can, and is a movie lover. He can also be found in the kitchen cooking regularly. His love of reading even earned him a special honor.

"In elementary school we had a reading test program called AR Points, where you received points based on how well you did on book quizzes, and I broke the school record for points. For some reason it is still one of my proudest life achievements. My record has since been broken," Clarey admitted.

As he gets to know the communities he's covering, he plans to dive into in-depth stories, especially those that show how policies affect the public or features that showcase human elements. He's enjoyed meeting many new people, and appreciates their willingness to get him up to speed on the area's news.

"Whether it's a city clerk or a random person, almost everyone is willing to share a little bit about themselves or give me a run-down on what is going on in their area. Keep it coming!"