

## **HU J-School Provides National Coverage of '08 Election**

Two students in the **Hampton University** Scripps Howard School of Journalism and Communications worked with Emmy award-winning news show "Dan Rather Reports" on Nov. 4 to provide national broadcast coverage of local election happenings. In addition, disciplines within the Scripps Howard School converged that night to report on the 2008 Presidential Election, offering students the experience of working in a full operating newsroom.

On Nov. 4, Michele Byrd and Leon Hendrix, III, both broadcast journalism majors, filed a three-minute news report illustrating Election Day happenings throughout the city of Hampton, aired in high definition on "Dan Rather Reports" on HDNet. By visiting local polling stations and interviewing area voters, the students' video served as the eyes and ears of Hampton, Va., on Election Day. HU is one of a small handful of universities from across the country that participated in this opportunity. Eight swing states (Ohio, Virginia, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Colorado and Florida) as well as the candidates' home states were represented. Assistant Professors W. Chris Leonard and Reggie Mitchell served as advisors for the students.

In addition, at 6 p.m., HU radio station WHOV 88.1 FM converted to a complete election news coverage format. Student anchors hosted a live radio broadcast complete with election news, results and analysis. Guest interviews with local media persons and U.S. Senate candidate Jim Gilmore were included.

At 7 p.m., the School's broadcast studio was transformed into a live television newsroom with broadcast students producing live ten-minute television news segments to air every half-hour on campus. The news segments featured guest interviews, election updates, and live and prepackaged stories covering issues such as absentee voting, the Palin Effect and healthcare.

"This is our first time doing this," said Van Dora Williams, assistant professor in the Scripps Howard School of Journalism and Communications. "They are trying to cover every angle of the election and we [the faculty] are trying to guide them. We're going to make this a work environment."