

Behind the Scenes with Dawndy Mercer

By Charles Campbell Team Writer

“I always wanted to be a journalist,” said Dawndy Mercer, WIS TV News Anchor. “From the time I was in the sixth grade when I

you get to the top. In my case I have a great life here. I work for a very strong TV station and have a very strong relationship with my managers and coworkers. I love where I live, I love the church I go to, I have awesome friends and I have every reason to stay here. So, I just recently re-signed a five year contract with WIS TV because I’d rather stay here.”

Dawndy Mercer worked at college radio and TV stations while attending Ball State University where she received her B.S. degree in Telecommunications in 1989. Her first TV job after graduating was in Green Bay, Wisconsin.

“There are people in this business who pretend to be something on camera and when the red light goes off they’re a completely different person,”

said Craig Melvin, WIS TV News Anchor. “There’s a great deal of that in this business. But Dawndy isn’t one of those people. She’s as genuine as she comes across on television. It’s like, what you see is what you get.”

He went on to say, “Her work is exceptional. She’s very genuine and I think people relate to that.”

When asked if she had changed her outlook since she started as a journalist fresh out of school into the real world, Dawndy had a surprising answer.

“I think I’m more committed to truth and accuracy than ever before,” said Dawndy. “I have a political affiliation but I’m not political. It’s a pretty strong rule here. I can’t go out fundraising for a political candidate or be active in any way because that would show partiality toward that party or group. We have to remain objective.”

“Dawndy brings an incredible amount of energy and commitment to WIS,” said Tina Blacklocke, WIS NEWS Director. “I can’t think of anybody here who works any harder than she does at keeping in touch with the viewer and helping them with their needs. She does those health alert reports every day and there are always several e-mails and phone calls asking what did you mean by this or where can I find out more about that.”

“And, Dawndy personally answers them because she wants to make sure that what she’s telling people is the right thing and that they have all the information they need in order to go ahead and make decisions for themselves.”

“I mean, it’s her real dedication that’s so impressive,” continued Tina. “I think that lots of people here at the station feel the same way. We know our viewers are so very important to us and we know that we can be very important to them.”

We try to keep a very personal relationship with them, and Dawndy certainly does that. She does so many personal appearances outside of the news and she is asked to so many things and I can’t imagine she ever says no.”

Most people who work late afternoons and into the dark hours of the evening would spend most of the early part of the day sleeping, shopping or just relaxing before returning to work. Not Dawndy Mercer. Her volunteer work comes first.

When asked if she was active doing volunteer work, she was quick to answer, “Oh, my goodness. I almost have to laugh at that question. Yes, in a huge way. I’m very active with Prevent Child Abuse South Carolina. I’m on the Board of Directors there. I’m active with the American Cancer

1994.

“This job puts you in a position to help others whether you want to or not,” said Dawndy. “Fortunately I have such a love for people and enjoy helping them. So I guess you can say that I’m real active.”

What is something that viewers would be surprised to learn about Dawndy Mercer?

“Every single night, as much as I love people all day long, as soon as I get home and I’m by myself that is my recuperation time and I think I really need that. Every night I get in bed and I read my Bible every night.

My cat, Gracie, without fail, and like clock work, climbs into my lap and my big German Shepherd, Katarina, jumps on the bed beside me and my Husky, Tashka, comes up on the other side of the bed next to me. It’s like this little happy family and it’s quiet in the house.

No phones are ringing, no pagers going off it’s the perfect time to recharge my batteries to get ready for the next day.



Dawndy Mercer at the WIS TV News Desk

did a school project I knew that I wanted to be a journalist. I love current events, I love speaking in front of people, I love creative writing, I love grammar and the English language and I just knew. It was a perfect fit for me.”

“All through junior high, high school and college I would tell people that’s what I was going to do. Most of the people I went to school with didn’t know what they wanted to do and I was just very blessed to know from the beginning, being in the sixth grade, that that’s what I was going to do and I’ve never doubted it and there’s nothing I’d rather do than this.”

Dawndy was a news reporter with WIS TV in Columbia from 1992 to 1996 before moving to a larger media market, Houston, Texas, where she stayed for five years before returning.

When asked if she was happy to be back and how long would it be before she was lured away to a larger TV market again, she had a very definite answer.

“I love it here and have thought about accepting an offer to move to a major market again,” answered Dawndy. “I think when most people who are serious about this business get into it that’s the goal-to not stop until



Dawndy and weatherman Ben Tanner review the day's news on the set

Society and the South Carolina Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. I teach Sunday School and I’m a regular speaker at churches, I teach seminars, I speak in schools, I emcee fund-raisers, mostly health related events.”

Dawndy survived thyroid cancer in

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