Truckee’s Paladino, Incline’s Solomon honored by SNC

Sierra Nevada College 2012 grad Jason Paladino has been named alumni of the year for 2016, while trustee Ben Solomon received the Lane Murray Distinguished Alumni Award.

Paladino is a Truckee native and reporter at UC Berkley’s Investigative Reporting Program at the Graduate School of Journalism. This year he earned the Society of Professional Journalists – NorCal 2016 James Madison Freedom of Information Student Award for his investigation into the Navy’s Sea Dragon program. Paladino was also a Livingston Award Finalist and Sigma Delta Chi Awards winner for his work on the project.

Paladino’s investigative work, which he began as a Berkeley graduate student, resulted in an NBC Nightly News story entitled “Sea Dragon Down, The Human Cost of the Navy’s Most Crash-prone Chopper.” Beginning with Navy data, Paladino found that the Navy used the Cold War-era Sea Dragon helicopter for years without proper maintenance and access to replacement parts. Records showed the Sea Dragon was frequently involved in crashes and fires, costing sailors their lives.

While at SNC he was the news editor and then managing editor for the Eagle’s Eye, the campus newspaper.

Solomon’s history with SNC goes back to its foundation in 1969, when he started as a volunteer professor. He served as the CEO of the college for 25 years, including administrative director (1970-80), president (1980-93 and 2003-05), and chancellor (1993-94). During his tenure, SNC grew from 23 full-time students and three converted buildings to several hundred students and an energy-efficient campus with five buildings.