LIFE

UCONN ALUM SPEAKS ABOUT JOURNEY TO ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

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Ethan Antonucci, a UConn alum spoke at the Bishop Center on Friday, November 6. He is known for screenwriting and production in the entertainment industry.

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Ethan Antonucci, a University of Connecticut alum known for screenwriting and production in the entertainment industry, returned to UConn on Friday, Nov. 6, to share how he navigated his career path.

Antonucci, who graduated from UConn in 1999 with a double major in journalism and communications, is most known for his work on "Game of Thrones." He also co-produced the 2025 Netflix series "Death by Lightning," a historical drama about assassinated U.S. President James A. Garfield.

Before telling his story, Antonucci shared clips of projects he had worked on. The film briefing included a suspense-filled scene from "Game of Thrones," a trailer for "Death by Lightning" and footage from a cross-country road trip he took with his UConn roommate to reach Los Angeles.

Antonucci's talk was guided by UConn's Digital Media & Design department head Heather Elliott-Famularo.

He first shared what he considered his "three tenants of existence" that guided him on his journey: trust your instincts, believe in yourself and manifest and visualize what you want in the world.

Antonucci's story continued with the media that made him want to pursue the film industry, especially "E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial."

"As a 4-year-old, seeing that in person for the first time was when I really knew that I wanted to do something that would give someone else the experience that I just had," Antonucci said. "I figured out I wanted to make 'E.T.s.'"

It took time for screenwriting to become a main part of Antonucci's life, but he engaged in writing in other ways. While at UConn, he said he initially joined The Daily Campus for free pizza in his second year, but he quickly fell in love with sports writing. The impulsive decision led him to the sports editor position in his fourth year, where he got to cover the men's basketball team as they won the NCAA championship in 1999.

"I knew the moment we won the national title, there was no way I was covering sports again," Antonucci said. "That paved the way for Hollywood."

After graduating, Antonucci saved money by landscaping before moving to Los Angeles in the fall. He found a job in the mailroom of Gersh Agency, where he read countless scripts and wrote his own in his free time for seven years.

But he said that if he could go back, he would spend less time at Gersh and would change his approach to writing. He said the work you show to the world has to be "exceptional."

"It's far more important that you make one great thing than you go and make seven mediocre things," Antonucci said. "I was just writing mediocre every single time because I just wanted to write. I should have just had one idea that I just loved and wrote it into the ground."

From Gersh, Antonucci used old and new connections to become a co-screenwriter on a professional project. Later on, he got a job in entertainment law, which led to the connections that got him working on seasons 6 through 8 of "Game of Thrones."

Now, Antonucci's focuses on producing film projects. He works at the production company Bighead Littlehead Berniehead, which was founded by the creators of "Game of Thrones." The company has since worked on projects like "3 Body Problem," "Death by Lightning" and "Metal Lords."

Antonucci has also reconnected with UConn through the "Hollywood Huskies" program that he created. He said he was shocked by how many UConn alumni he came across in the entertainment industry without knowing they went to the same university. These repeated interactions inspired him to make the program to foster more active collaboration between alumni.

"The goal is to have a little stable of a couple of managers, a couple of agents, people that are within the business," Antonucci said. "Our relationships can help become your relationships."

Elliott-Famularo built on his idea and said she hopes to have a physical location for the program in the future.

"We're beyond the point of Post-it notes on windows and wandering around for years and missing opportunities," Elliott-Famularo said. "We're manifesting that this is gonna happen."

Antonucci's talk was filled with various behind-the-scenes anecdotes about "Game of Thrones" and the multiple times he crossed paths with Tobey Maguire, among other entertaining vignettes. He took questions from the audience after he finished.

Musawir Abrar, a fifth-semester master's in fine arts student focusing on filmmaking in the Digital Media & Design department, said Antonucci's trajectory was helpful to learn from.

"Getting the perspective of an aspiring writer, who, as a literary agent in LA, found connections and eventually returned to writing later in life, was extremely educational," Abrar said.

Like Antonucci, Abrar has an interest in screenwriting and teaches screenwriting classes to undergraduate students. He also said he hopes for the Hollywood Husky program to continue to grow.

"Once I graduate, I'd love to have access to an affinity group like this," Abrar. "It's extremely valuable, what the department is doing, what the university's doing, and we definitely need more information on this and access to it."



Ethan Antonucci, a screenwriter, producer and 1999 UConn graduate. Last Friday, Antinucci spoke to UConn students about his journey through the entertainment industry.

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