JOY SEWING (/)

Joy Sewing is a veteran journalist with more than 25 years in the industry. In 2023, she became the Houston Chronicle's first Black news columnist in the paper's 122 years (https://www.houstonchronicle.com/about/newsroom-news/article/joy-sewing-houston-chronicle-news-columnist-18541695.php). She was previously the culture columnist (https://www.houstonchronicle.com/author/joy-sewing/) and was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in commentary in 2022.

Joy has worked at the Kansas City Star, New York Post and was a correspondent for People magazine. She also freelanced regularly for Money, Vibe, Shape, Time, Town & Country, and other magazines. As

the Chronicle's former fashion editor, Joy has interviewed hundreds of famous faces, from Oscar de la Renta to Houston's own Beyoncé Knowles.

Joy holds a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Houston, a master's degree in business management from Webster University, and has taught journalism at the University of Central Missouri and the University of Houston.

She is also a National Press Foundation Spanish Language Fellow, in which she lived in Mexico, an España Y América Case Media Fellow, and an Institute for the Advance Studies of Race Fellow, in which she studied racism in Cuba.

In 2021, Joy was one of 15 journalists nationwide selected for the Poynter Insitute's Power of Diverse Voices (https://www.poynter.org/news-release/2021/poynters-power-of-diverse-voices-program-elevates-writers-of-color-meet-the-spring-2021-class/?fbclid=IwAR0Fq_zaLjP6fKX4wiW4e0-FVaW2jJjtMwMmpObdkrI_t8SV_iLkrQ_dbgo) journalism fellowship, She also was honored for her columns by the Society for Features Journalism, which called her columns "touching works about humanity."

She is author of *"Ava and the Prince: The Adventures of Two Rescue Pups,"* (https://www.avaandtheprince.com)a children's picture book about her own rescue boxer dogs. The book was selected by the Barbara Bush Literacy Foundation Houston for the home-library

program. Joy and her dog, Ava, visited more than 100 schools, libraries, and special events to teach young children lessons about reading, animal empathy, and love through her book.

As a community leader, Joy is the founder of Year of Joy (https://www.yearofjoy.org), a 501c3 nonprofit organization, to spread joy to children from underserved communities in Houston. Her annual Year of Joy Holiday Ice Skating Party is a holiday tradition and has had more than 1000 children participate since it started in 2016. The Year of Joy Figure

Photo: Lezu Photography

Skating Scholar program was launched in 2021 and provides free ice skating lessons to children. A former competitive ice skater, Joy became Houston's first African American figure skating coach while in college.

Joy is also a foster-to-adoptive mom and has become an advocate for children in foster care (https://www.houstonchronicle.com/lifestyle/article/sewing-houston-foster-care-journey-ended-17890995.php)and adoption. She's received the following honors for her work and community service:

- "Year of Joy" day proclaimed by Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner on Dec. 12, 2023.

- Houston Association of Black Journalists' Trailblazer Award, 2023

- St. Agnes Academy Alumni Award, 2023

- Hearst Gives Back Community Service Award, 2023

- Houston Women of Distinction, 2022

- One of five Houston "unsung" heroes featured in the "Monuments" exhibit (https://www.discoverygreen.com/monuments)at Discovery Green, 2020

- Houston Humanitarian Award, 2017