

FIJ – SUPPORTING INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING PROJECTS AROUND THE WORLD

People in this Issue

Eliza Griswold
Naveena Sadasivam
Angie Newsome

News from FIJ



- **Eliza Griswold** has won [the 2019 Pulitzer Prize in General Nonfiction](#) for her book *Amity and Prosperity: One Family and the Fracturing of America*. She received an FIJ grant to help her reporting on the health, economic and political costs that follow in the footsteps of the American fracking boom. The Pulitzer committee called the book “A classic American story, grippingly told, of an Appalachian family struggling to retain its middle class status in the shadow of destruction wreaked by corporate oil fracking.”



- **The Park Foundation** of Ithaca, N.Y., has made a \$50,000 grant to FIJ to underwrite FIJ's core grant-making program for 2019. This is a cause for celebration because it is the ninth year that the [Park Foundation](#) has chosen to support FIJ grants for independent investigative reporters!



- Join us Friday, June 14, when FIJ hosts a brown bag lunch at the **Investigative Reporters and Editors conference**, which runs from June 13-16 in Houston. Sandy Bergo, FIJ executive director, will explain the nitty-gritty of [applying for an FIJ grant](#), and answer any and all questions. Also at the table will be someone from the **Pulitzer Center** who will give out tips for winning their reporting grants. FIJ is a proud sponsor of [the 2019 IRE conference](#).

Investigation Spotlights



- The **Radio Ambulante** episode [Head Count](#) went behind the scenes in Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria hit the island on September 20, 2017. Ambulante's reporters went to court to get the Puerto Rican government to release mortality data. The program brings to light how hundreds of victims, mostly elderly, died, not during the hurricane, but in the six months after the storm.

The program was underwritten by the Ford Foundation, which sponsored the FIJ/Schuster Institute diversity fellowships.

FIJ GRANT DEADLINE: MONDAY, MAY 13, 11:59PM EST

Investigation Spotlights *cont'd.*



Samantha White survived a sexual assault when she was 16. Melissa Sue Gerrits/The Fayetteville Observer

- [Seeking Conviction](#), an investigation by [FIJ grantee Angie Newsome](#) of Carolina Public Press, has already sparked some legislative reaction.

A [bill](#) proposed in North Carolina would close legal loopholes in sexual assault laws that were highlighted in Newsome's investigative series.

Newsome's project found that fewer than one in four sexual assault defendants are convicted in the state. Seeking Conviction is a multipart investigative reporting project that Carolina Public Press led in collaboration with 10 other news media partners around North Carolina.



In March 2016, floodwaters dug a 50-foot wide hole on the downstream end of this dam. Delos Dewayne Collins/Texas Observer

- For years, more than 7,000 small dams across Texas have gone unregulated or uninspected. Despite their size, many small dams are ticking time bombs, according to safety experts. And state data show that the rate of failure for these dams is increasing dramatically: Of the approximately 300 dam failures in Texas since 1910, half have occurred in the last nine years. The effects of climate change further compound the impact as increasing rainfall – particularly in the eastern half of the state – leaves more and more communities threatened.

In [Dammed to Fail](#) in the Texas Observer, **Naveena Sadasivam** traces the history of a burgeoning crisis, one fueled by this lack of regulatory oversight and political will on the part of the Texas Legislature.

A Gentle Reminder from FIJ



- The Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Foundation, a long-standing supporter, has awarded \$75,000 to support its grant-making program for domestic investigations in 2019. This amount includes \$25,000 to be awarded if FIJ

raises an additional \$25,000 in new funding before December 31.

[Help us](#) reach that matching goal – because, as always, all of it helps to fund even more watchdog journalism. And thanks!

This FIJ Newsletter was compiled by Jerry Redfern.

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