



Fund for
Investigative
Journalism

Thank You!



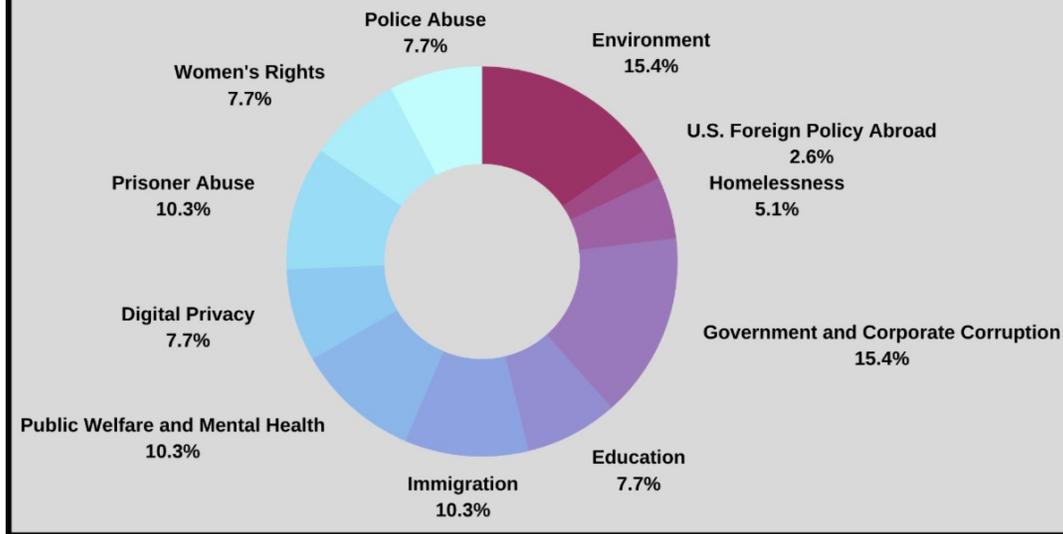
We were honored to have received significant support from all our donors in 2019. Your donations were used to support 39 investigations around the country. With your help we will continue our commitment to support investigative journalism that informs, uncovers wrongdoing and gives a voice to the voiceless.

DONATE

A Look Back at the Stories Our Grantees Covered in 2019

It all starts with our grantees—the reporters and investigative journalists who commit their lives to uncovering, unraveling and documenting the stories that impact the world most. From migrant abuse at the border to the Flint, Michigan, water crisis and beyond, our grantees reported on a diverse array of issues in 2019. Below, we give you a breakdown of the issues our grantees covered last year and some examples of their work.

Issues Covered by FIJ Grantees in 2019



In Massachusetts, FIJ grantee Shawn Musgrave documented prosecutorial misconduct and evidence tampering in drug offense cases **for Reason Magazine**, which resulted in the state having to throw out more than 47,000 convictions. And in Flint, Michigan, grantees Abby Ellis and Kayla Ruble investigated and uncovered the extent of a deadly Legionnaires' disease outbreak during the water crisis, and how city officials failed to identify and address it. Their documentary titled "**Flint's Deadly Water**," was released by Frontline.

Our grantees also focused heavily on issues affecting the environment. In Washington state, John Stang documented how environmental groups are attempting to hold the U.S. Navy accountable after their dismantling of two decommissioned aircraft carriers left tons of toxic, copper-laden debris in Puget Sound. According to Stang's reporting for **Cascadia Magazine**, environmental groups warn that the toxins left by the Navy could have deadly effects on the salmon population there. And in an isolated national refuge in Alaska, Jane Kay and photographer Ash Adams explored the impact of a Trump administration-approved road that could have a devastating effect on the wildlife and people living there in an **article for Reveal**.

Covering topics from corruption to women's rights to police abuse, our grantees showed incredible commitment to journalism in 2019. The stories highlighted here, as well as the 39 other investigations completed by our grantees last year, can all be found on **FIJ.org**.

FIJ Grantee in North Carolina Brings Change to Sexual Assault Laws in the State

In October 2018, **Carolina Public Press**, a nonprofit news outlet, took a look at sexual assault conviction rates in North Carolina. What they found were outdated, ineffective laws that blurred the lines of consent and



made it harder for offenders to be convicted.

“We looked at court data – a 4½-year data set – and analyzed it for the first time in North Carolina,” said Angie Newsome, founder and executive director of Carolina Public Press.

Her team found that fewer than one in four sexual assault defendants were convicted in the period they investigated, and fewer than a third of North Carolina’s 100 counties had

sexual assault convictions. The state was the only one in the nation where a person could not revoke consent during a sexual encounter. The state’s law also determined that if a person was assaulted after drinking or doing drugs, it was not a crime.

“Those were the two aspects that led to the lack of convictions,” said Newsome.

Three days after the publication of the story, a North Carolina State House representative introduced legislation to fix the law. The reforms were approved in November of 2019. It was an outcome most journalists only dream of.

“This kind of impact is like lightning striking twice in the same spot,” said Newsome.

News About FIJ

FIJ Names New President, Vice President and Treasurer



Board President Mark Greenblatt

Mark Greenblatt is the senior national investigative correspondent for the Scripps Washington Bureau. He is a three-time Peabody award-winner and the recipient of the IRE Medal, multiple national Edward R. Murrow awards, the Livingston Award, the duPont-Columbia Award, a national Emmy for investigative reporting. He is a two-time finalist for Harvard’s Goldsmith Prize for investigative reporting.

FIJ Welcomes Four New Advisory Board Members

Three esteemed board members with more than 15 years combined at FIJ are cycling off the Board of Directors due to term limits, but have agreed to join FIJ’s Advisory Board.

Longtime FIJ Executive Director Sandy Bergo, who retired after 10 years of dedicated work, will join them on the Advisory Board.

Below you can read why they find FIJ so special.

**Former Board
President Marcia
Bullard**



Board Vice President Cheryl W. Thompson

Cheryl Thompson is an investigative correspondent for NPR. She also teaches investigative reporting as an associate professor of journalism at George Washington University. Prior to joining NPR in January 2019, Thompson was an investigative reporter for The Washington Post for 22 years. She has written extensively about law enforcement, political corruption and guns.



"I've been privileged to see firsthand, of course, the great number of

important stories that have been brought to light because FIJ funded the reporters working on them."



Former Board Vice President Clarence Page

"It has been an honor, a privilege and an education to serve on the FIJ board, especially in these times of diminishing resources and funding for traditional investigative reporting."



Board Treasurer Alan Berlow

Alan Berlow is a freelance reporter, a former foreign correspondent for NPR, and author of "Dead Season, A Story of Murder and Revenge on the Philippine Island of Negros."

His work has appeared in The New York Times Magazine, The Atlantic and Harper's.

Berlow has himself received two FIJ grants, in 1977 and 1991. He is a board member of the Morton K. and Jane Blaustein Foundation.



Former Board Member David Boardman

"Serving as an FIJ board member was one of the most rewarding, gratifying experiences of my career. Knowing that we were helping investigative journalists turn visions into reality, suspicions into evidence, was powerful and profound."



Former FIJ Executive Director Sandy Bergo

"It's been great fun to work with all the journalists who come to FIJ with stories they are burning to tell, and gratifying to help them get the resources they need."



Bill Marimow, former vice president of strategic development for The Philadelphia Inquirer, has joined the board of directors of FIJ.

As a reporter at The Inquirer, Marimow received the Pulitzer Prize for public service twice in 1978 and 1985. "Bill Marimow's addition to FIJ's board ensures that investigative reporters nationwide who seek support for their work will have a smart, dedicated ally working to widen opportunities for

them," said FIJ President Mark Greenblatt. "Bill has spent a storied career reporting and managing high-impact, carefully reported investigative projects. FIJ enthusiastically welcomes him."

"Joining the board of the Fund for Investigative Journalism is both a privilege and an opportunity," said Marimow. "A privilege because of the importance of in-depth journalism to a vibrant democracy and an opportunity because the Fund both recognizes and helps to fund projects that illuminate issues that matter to all of us."

Our Grantees' Most Recent Work



Foster Parents Struggle Against Retaliation by State Caseworkers

Reporter and FIJ grantee Rachel Nielsen investigated the complaints of foster parents in Washington state who say government caseworkers have created a culture of fear. The foster parents say they are being intimidated by state officials over trivial issues. State officials have held two meetings with groups of foster parents, but there have been no changes, according to records obtained by **InvestigateWest** under the Public Records Act.



Investigation Shows Native Americans More Likely to be Searched by Washington State Police

For more than 12 years, Washington State Patrol troopers have been searching drivers from minority communities, particularly Native Americans, five times more often than whites, FIJ grantees Jason Buch and Joy Borkholder, report for **InvestigateWest**.

Their investigation also found that although there is a state law requiring that officers file reports on the race of drivers they stop, state troopers have done this only three times in the last 15 years.

InvestigateWest's legal counsel, Kathy George, obtained more than 3,000 pages of records needed to complete this investigation. The state Department of Children, Youth and Families had improperly withheld the records for 16 months.

The story, which was published last month, has prompted **responses from lawmakers** in the state, who say they will be tackling the issue during this year's legislative session.



FIJ Grant Recipient, Tucson Sentinel, Receives Special Recognition for Reporting

The Pima County Board of Supervisors in Tucson, Arizona, declared Wednesday, January 22nd, to be "**TucsonSentinel.com Day**" to recognize the integral role the newspaper played in informing the community for 10 years.

FIJ has awarded the Tucson Sentinel with numerous grants to assist in their reporting in recent years and is proud to share their success.

"Support from the Fund for Investigative Journalism, coupled with the investment of so many in the Tucson community, has enabled us to undertake difficult, searching reporting," said Dylan Smith, editor of the Tucson Sentinel.

"We're honored by this recognition of our decade of nonprofit journalism, and are committed to even more watchdog work to come."

FOLLOW US

