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Paul Steiger  
*ProPublica*
Dear Friend,

Even before the tumultuous election cycle revealed fresh challenges to journalists and the news media, RCFP has consistently been the go-to resource for journalists seeking legal support. And, as we now know, American journalists face a more difficult landscape than ever before.

Digital technology and an evolving nonprofit and independent media sector have created new challenges for the ways journalists gather information and report the news while dwindling resources mean reporters often lack access to in-house legal counsel who can advise them.

The continuing escalation of serious threats to press freedom make RCFP’s work more urgent and important than ever before and it makes your support more critical.

For decades, RCFP has provided news organizations and reporters with free legal assistance and a collective voice on key First Amendment issues. But never has the need for RCFP’s intervention in critical cases and advocacy for press freedom been more crucial.

With your generous support, we have demonstrated impact far above our weight class, and we will continue to bolster our legal defense practice and expand our services to ensure that free guidance and legal support are available to all of today’s storytellers, from the groundbreaking documentary filmmaker to the online investigative journalist to the reporter for your hometown newspaper.

Thank you for your continued investment in our work and for your unwavering support of the First Amendment and freedom of the press.

Bruce Brown
Executive Director

David Boardman
Chair, Steering Committee
HIGHLIGHTS 2016

Fought back against government subpoenas of reporters

When the government tries to force reporters to reveal their sources it has a chilling effect and threatens their ability to report on key stories.

• We built a coalition of 36 media organizations to stand up against the government’s threat to subpoena 25 hours of outtakes from Mark Boal’s interviews with Bowe Bergdahl for season two of the popular podcast “Serial.”

• We rallied support from almost 60 organizations for New York Times reporter Frances Robles, who had been ordered to testify in a criminal trial. In October, she prevailed, but the case continued into 2017. In October 2017, RCFP filed another brief with the New York Court of Appeals in support of Robles’s effort to quash the subpoena.

My experience at the Reporters Committee gave me the opportunity to work on issues very few people fresh out of law school are exposed to and provided me with the guidance of reputable attorneys to broaden my skill set, legal writing, and knowledge of media law.

— ARIEL GLICKMAN

2016 BY THE NUMBERS

494
Journalist inquiries answered by our staff attorneys

50
Briefs and comments

119
Organizations joined our briefs
Our FOIA lawsuit led to change in FBI policy on agents’ impersonation of the media

- In the fall of 2016, the FBI imposed new restrictions on agents’ ability to impersonate members of the media, following pressure from the Reporters Committee and other organizations. The change comes after documents released in a FOIA lawsuit showed that the FBI impersonated journalists during the course of a 2007 investigation. Law enforcement impersonating reporters seriously erodes public trust in the media and affects news organizations’ ability to gather and report important stories.

The issue is ongoing after it came to light that the FBI set up a fictional production company and agents posed as documentary filmmakers in an investigation following the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge standoff shooting. In 2017, the Reporters Committee filed a lawsuit against the Justice Department and the FBI for records about the FBI’s impersonation of documentary filmmakers.

Tracked threats to reporters and news organizations during the presidential campaign

- The Reporters Committee launched a service to track and respond to interference with newsgathering during the 2016 election. Since the election, attacks on press freedom have escalated, and in one instance in May 2017, Montana congressional candidate Greg Gianforte bodyslammed Guardian reporter Ben Jacobs. He was elected to Congress a week later. In the wake of these continuing attacks, we are continuing to monitor, track, and defend against ongoing threats to press freedom.

2016 BY THE NUMBERS

16 Cases litigated pro bono

2 Oral arguments in federal appellate court

5 Legal fellows helped power our amicus and litigation work
HIGHLIGHTS 2016

Filed a lawsuit to unseal settlement documents in case related to Trump Tower

- RCFP and *Time* magazine filed an application to unseal settlement documents in a class action lawsuit alleging that The Trump Organization and other entities related to Donald J. Trump employed undocumented Polish workers “off the books” in connection with the construction of Trump Tower in New York City.

In 2017, Katie Townsend argued the case for the Reporters Committee before the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit which sent the case back to the trial court after agreeing with RCFP’s argument.

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As the Stanton Foundation Media Litigation Fellow at the Reporters Committee, I gained valuable, real-world experience as a First Amendment litigator.

— CAITLIN VOGUS
staff attorney and Stanton Foundation Media Litigation Fellow (2015–2017)

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Brought together tech companies and the news media to fight back against the right to be forgotten

- RCFP Executive Director Bruce Brown raised the alarm and called for collaboration between the news media and the technology sector on the growing threat of “the right to be forgotten,” a European law which requires Google to remove search results, and even news articles, on demand.

The Reporters Committee and a media coalition of 28 news and journalist organizations urged the Conseil d’État, France’s highest administrative court, to strike down an order requiring Google to cleanse search results across all domains worldwide.
Filed lawsuits against the government on behalf of reporters seeking access to public information

Information is essential for the public to participate in our democracy and to hold government accountable. That’s why we regularly work with reporters who are bringing important stories to light.

• Reporters Committee attorneys represented David Yanośky, a reporter for the Atlantic Media publication Quartz, pro bono in a Freedom of Information lawsuit after the Department of Commerce attempted to charge Yanośky nearly $174,000 in fees in response to a FOIA request.

• RCFP built a coalition of major national media companies and filed a motion to unseal court documents and 34 letters written on behalf of former Gen. David Petraeus by high-ranking U.S. politicians, world leaders, military officials, and academics. We won, and the contents of the unsealed documents were widely reported in news outlets nationwide.

• RCFP attorneys worked on behalf of the Tulsa World and journalist Ziva Branstetter in a case seeking records relating to the state’s botched execution of Clayton Lockett. The case is ongoing but has already led to the release of many newsworthy records, earning Branstetter and her colleague Cary Aspinwall a Pulitzer Prize nomination. In 2017, after RCFP’s challenge, the Oklahoma Legislature amended the Oklahoma Open Records Act. It was signed into law by the Governor earlier this year.

We would not be making the progress with Open Records in Oklahoma without the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press.

They took our case in 2014 and have stuck with it through myriad delays, judicial changes, political maneuverings, and unforeseen circumstances. The work done on our behalf by Katie Townsend and Adam Marshall has been substantial and it has elevated journalism in our state.

— SUSAN ELLERBACH, Managing Editor of the Tulsa World
RCFP launched a new litigation strategy to expand access to court records concerning the government’s secretive use of electronic surveillance tools

• RCFP intervened in an unsealing case filed by journalist Jason Leopold, then of Vice News, seeking authorizations from non-active law enforcement investigations for the government’s use of certain electronic surveillance tools.

Such secrecy shields a large portion of the federal judiciary from access by the press and the public. After RCFP’s intervention, the court released a list of over 200 sealed applications for the use of select surveillance tools that were made by the D.C. U.S. Attorney’s Office in 2012.

• In October 2016, RCFP successfully filed an application to unseal court records related to the investigation and prosecution of Stephen Jin-Woo Kim, a former State Department employee who pleaded guilty in 2014 to the unauthorized disclosure of national defense information in connection with an alleged leak to Fox News reporter James Rosen.

The Stanton Foundation National Security Legal Fellowship at RCFP has helped me narrow my focus by specializing in an area of the law that has always interested me, and broaden my practice to include policy advocacy, amicus support, and academic research.

I’m fortunate to be honing my craft as a lawyer while also enjoying the satisfaction that comes from working to advance civil liberties.

— SELINA MACLAREN
Successfully unsealed transcripts of witness testimony in World War II-era investigation of the Chicago Tribune

• The Reporters Committee, arguing on behalf of historian Elliot Carlson and a coalition of organizations, succeeded in unsealing transcripts of witness testimony from a historic 1942 grand jury investigation of the Chicago Tribune.

The investigation of the Tribune marks the only time in U.S. history that the government has attempted to prosecute a major newspaper for violating the Espionage Act. The transcripts of witness testimony are now public.

After witnessing the botched execution of Clayton Lockett in 2014, I faced a state government that was stonewalling and dragging its feet, hoping those tactics would make me and the Tulsa World give up and settle for officially approved information releases.

RCFP actually reached out to me and the World and asked how they could help. And we gladly took them up on an offer to review our case and eventually to file this litigation. It has already had historic impact, with a judicial ruling that delay is denial.

Because of their work, and because of RCFP’s commitment to supporting this lawsuit and other efforts like it, the state of Oklahoma has changed its policy and promised to begin responding to open records requests in a rational and fair manner.

I am profoundly grateful for RCFP’s support of this lawsuit and of our quest for the truth. This is such an important mission in these times of an outright federal assault on the mission of journalism.

— ZIVA BRANSETTER
Senior Editor, Reveal (Formerly with the Tulsa World)
David Boardman of Temple University elected chair of steering committee

On June 11, 2016, members of the Reporters Committee steering committee elected David Boardman (left) as chair. Boardman is the dean of Klein College of Media and Communication at Temple University.

Helped to modernize the Freedom of Information Act on its 50th anniversary

As part of a coalition, Reporters Committee helped update the Freedom of Information Act which President Obama signed into law on the 50th anniversary of FOIA.

2016 First Amendment Awards and gala

The Reporters Committee held its 2016 gala dinner and First Amendment Awards on May 17 in New York City.

The event, hosted by NBC Nightly News Anchor Lester Holt, honored NBC News Special Correspondent Tom Brokaw with the Fred Graham Distinguished Service Award, recognizing his two decades on the Reporters Committee board and as a champion of a free press.

RCFP also honored Eve Burton and the Office of the General Counsel for Hearst, Alberto Ibargüen and Eric Newton of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation with First Amendment Awards. Co-chairs of the evening were AOL Inc. CEO Tim Armstrong and Columbia University President Lee Bollinger.
2016 First Amendment Awards and gala

Above: RCFP Executive Director Bruce Brown
Right: Honoree Eve Burton

Above (l-r): Tim Armstrong, Bruce Brown, Eric Newton, Eve Burton, Alberto Ibargüen, and Pierre Thomas

Above (l-r): Gregg Leslie, Michael Lambert, Adam Marshall, Hannah Bloch-Wehba, Katie Townsend, Caitlin Vogus, and Kevin Delaney

Above (l-r): Andrea Mitchell, Carol Hagen-Holt
SUPPORTERS 2016

The Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press would like to thank the following organizations that made gifts between January 1 and December 31, 2016:

$200,000 and above
John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation

$100,000 – $199,999
First Look Media
Hearst Communications, Inc.
Robert R. McCormick Foundation

$50,000 – $99,999
Ethics & Excellence in Journalism Foundation
Stanton Foundation
Starr Foundation

$25,000 – $49,999
AOL
Dow Jones Foundation
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NBCUniversal
Raymond James Financial

$10,000 – $24,999
A&E Networks
ALM
American Society of News Editors Foundation
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Clifford Chance
Davis Wright Tremaine LLP
Debevoise & Plimpton LLP
Disney Worldwide Services, Inc.
Fitch Ratings Inc.
Gannett Foundation

$5,000 – $9,999
The Associated Press
The Estée Lauder Companies Inc.
Fox News
Gilbert Foundation
John & Marcia Goldman Foundation
New York Times
Straus News
TEGNA

$1,000 – $4,999
APCO Worldwide
Arnold & Porter
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C-SPAN
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Covington & Burling
CUNY Graduate School of Journalism
SUPPORTERS 2016

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Scripps
Scripps Howard Foundation
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Vinson & Elkins
Washington Post

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Amazonsmile
Baker Root Family Foundation
Benevity
City News Service
Frahn Family Fund
Livingston Enterprise
Pfizer Foundation
Polton Simon Fund
Rosewood Foundation
Silicon Valley Community Foundation
Tinyblue Foundation

The Reporters Committee would also like to thank the following individuals for their generosity in 2016, including the sustaining donors listed on page 13 who made monthly contributions. We also extend our sincere gratitude to the many contributors who supported the Reporters Committee with gifts under $250, not listed here due to space restrictions. This list includes donors who made gifts between January 1 and December 31, 2016.

$10,000 and above
Floyd Abrams
Zach Adler
Elizabeth Braden
Emma Byrd
Charles Hale
Ben Heineman & Cristine Russell
Laura Joshua
Andrew & Julie Klingenstern
Kimberley Mertz
Benjamin & Kathryn Pfaff
Heather Podesta

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David Bradley
Ann Chernicoff
Robert Rifkind

$1,000 – $4,999
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Stephen Adler
Bruce Brown & Amy Rifkind
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Jane McDonnell
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Allison Clayton
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Laura R. Handman
Anna Jenefsky
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Andrea Knox
Robert Kolker
Kathleen Kunzer & Paul Rosenzweig
Joel Kurtzberg
Benjamin Kwasnick
David Lauter
John & Martha Lubell
Rebecca Meisels
John Membrino
Noemi Millman
Andre Needham
Robert O’Neil
Andrea & Alan Pendleton
Carl Schachter
Nicole Shampaine
Nelson Smith
Rebecca Smith
Jennifer Sondag
Leif Strickland
Julie Suh
Wendy K. Thomas
David Yanofsky
Julian & Stacy Yochum
Rebecca Zacks

$250 – $499
Anonymous (4)
Rita Barnett
Steve Bodow
Peter Canfield
W. Hodding Carter, III & Patricia Derian
Natasha Chan
Andrea Chase & C. Douglas Howard
Lucy A. Dalglish
Monica Dias
Charles Estes
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Olivia Golden
James Grimmelmann
Beth Haverkamp
Brian Healy
Mona Houck
Theresa House
Talya Housman
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Kristin Hussey
Martha Hutton
Susan Israel
John Kennedy
Laura King
Lauren Kirchner
Alison Kodjak
Bernard Kohn
SUPPORTERS 2016

Victor Kovner
Frank Kunstel
Philip LaVelle
Elizabeth Layne
Jeffrey Leen
Carl Leubsdorf & Susan Page
Charles Lewis
Patrick Liddiard
Doyle McManus
Kathy Miller
Linda Museus
David Nell
Scott Nelson
Kye Pawlenko
Louis Petrich
Laura Prather
Aaron Prennall
David J. Randall
Rudolph Rasin
Lucia Rather
Marcia Rhoads
David Rivel
Seth Rosenfeld
Tom Rubin & Nina Russell
Tonda Rush
Gemma Sands
Paraag Sarva
Melanie Schaffer
Mark Schleifstein
Eric Schmitt
Henry Schuster
Charles Sennett
Amy Shapiro
Kit Shook
Robert Silvers
Steven Sloan
Leila Strachan
Robert Thomson
Steven Waldman
Stephen Wermeil
Scott Wilson
Elida Witthoeft

SUSTAINING DONORS 2016

The Reporters Committee extends a very special thank you to our sustaining donors – individuals who signed up to make monthly gifts to support our work in 2016. To become a sustaining donor, visit rcfp.org/donate.

Jacob Albertson
Anonymous
Susan Armitage
Ryan Baldwin
Patrick Barry
David Beyer
Joseph Blass
Lindsay Boyle & Molly Yanity
Keith Bunin
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Benjamin Cush
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Hannah Selinger
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Daniel Sproul
John Stange
Brian Steffen
Dylan Stein
Edward Stumpf
Allison Tanenhaus
Sara Thierman
Megan Thompson
Paul Voosen
Annie Wilker
Laura Wright
SunAh Young
**FINANCIAL REPORT 2016**
From the Reporters Committee Audited Financial Statement for the year ended Dec. 31, 2016

### Functional Expenses, Cash Basis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legal Defense and Research</td>
<td>$1,043,175</td>
<td>64.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising*</td>
<td>$381,732</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management and General</td>
<td>$190,636</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,615,543</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Includes expenses for annual gala

### Revenue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contributions and Grants</td>
<td>$991,244</td>
<td>46.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising Events</td>
<td>$904,546</td>
<td>42.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest and Dividends</td>
<td>$173,513</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realized Gains</td>
<td>$32,249</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Services</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Kind Contributions</td>
<td>$1,300</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Income</td>
<td>$5,505</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,117,357</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# Assets, Liabilities and Fund Balances, Cash Basis

## Assets

### Current Assets:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asset</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
<td>$621,582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money market funds</td>
<td>$887,829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificates of deposit</td>
<td>$770,225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government bond obligations</td>
<td>$1,259,026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate bond obligations</td>
<td>$195,702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate stocks</td>
<td>$2,934,349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Investments</td>
<td>$6,047,131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total current assets</td>
<td>$6,668,713</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Other Assets:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asset</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Security deposits</td>
<td>$27,636</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Assets** $6,669,349

## Fund Balances

**Unrestricted**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undesignated</td>
<td>$1,886,515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board designated</td>
<td>$771,382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporarily Restricted</td>
<td>$4,038,452</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Fund Balances** $6,696,349
ABOUT THE REPORTERS COMMITTEE

The Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press was founded in 1970 by leading journalists, including Anthony Lukas, Ben Bradlee, Fred Graham, Jack Nelson, Eileen Shanahan, Mike Wallace, Robert Maynard, and Tom Wicker.

The founders built the Reporters Committee from an ad hoc group operating from a desk in the press room at the U.S. Supreme Court to a nationally recognized leader in First Amendment law and advocacy whose work is cited in court opinions, news stories, and throughout the news industry for its thought leadership and practical impact.

While throughout much of its history, the Reporters Committee focused on amicus briefs and developing legal resources for journalists and news organizations, in 2014 we began a direct litigation practice, representing journalists or news organizations in court on a pro bono basis. Today, our staff attorneys work with journalists, news organizations, media lawyers, documentary filmmakers and technology companies on free press issues ranging from access to courts, open government and freedom of information to reporter’s privilege, prior restraint, libel and privacy and the establishment of new digital precedents under the First Amendment.

Our mission is to protect the right to gather and distribute news; to keep government accountable by ensuring access to public records, meetings and courtrooms; and to preserve the principles of free speech and unfettered press, as guaranteed by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

SAVE THE DATE

Please save the date for the 2018 First Amendment Awards Dinner, to be held on May 22, 2018 at the Pierre Hotel in New York City. Honorees will be announced in December.

For information on sponsorship opportunities, please contact Katie Aune, Development Director, at kaune@rcfp.org or 202-795-9319.
Support the Reporters Committee

The Reporters Committee relies on foundation, corporate and individual support to provide free First Amendment and media law guidance and resources that journalists and news organizations have relied on for almost 50 years. Your support helps us:

• Keep our Legal Defense Hotline running 24/7 for any journalist who needs assistance.
• Provide free trainings and resources on media law topics to help journalists navigate legal issues.
• Defend the First Amendment, free press and the right to access public information in court.
• Fund fellowships for young lawyers to fight for journalists’ rights and protect the first Amendment.

Invest in our work today by visiting rcfp.org/donate to make a secure online donation or mail a check payable to the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press to 1156 15th St NW, Suite 1250, Washington, DC 20005.

Protect the First Amendment for the next generation

A legacy gift to the Reporters Committee will help ensure that our work to protect the First Amendment and a free press continues for the next 50 years. Make a gift to the Reporters Committee in your will or trust, or by naming us as a beneficiary of your retirement or other financial account.

Learn more at rcfp.org/donate/legacy-giving or by contacting Katie Aune, Development Director, at kaune@rcfp.org or 202-795-9319.