FIGHTING SECRECY AND STANDING UP FOR LOCAL JOURNALISTS

Across the nation, journalists face a growing culture of secrecy in state and local government and increasing mistrust, spelling trouble for our First Amendment freedoms and our democracy.

Legal support is essential infrastructure to newsrooms and a key step in the path to reinvigorating local news. Through our Local Legal Initiative and ProJourn programs, both generously funded by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the Reporters Committee focuses on making sure that newsrooms can get free legal help while they pursue the stories that matter most in their communities. Collectively, our attorneys are helping brave editors and reporters chip away at the culture of secrecy.

- In COLORADO, our Local Legal Initiative attorney helped the editor of the Crested Butte News appeal a district court decision holding that the names of people who seek to ban books from a library could be withheld from the public.

- Our OKLAHOMA attorney sued to obtain records about applications for federal COVID relief funds. Using records obtained in litigation, the nonprofit news outlet Oklahoma Watch revealed which agencies, businesses, and nonprofits sought and secured billions of dollars in aid.

- Our PENNSYLVANIA attorney helped Spotlight PA obtain more than a million records from the state Department of Health for a data-driven investigation into the state’s medical marijuana certification program.

- In OREGON, our attorney helped The Oregonian obtain records about how much water Google uses to cool its data centers. As a result, Google announced that it would no longer hide its water-use numbers as a trade secret anywhere in the country.

- Our TENNESSEE attorney helped the Associated Press access graphic videos showing prison staff physically restraining and forcibly medicating a mentally ill death-row inmate.

To expand our capacity to provide free legal support for journalists and other newsgatherers, the Reporters Committee is building out ProJourn, an innovative program piloted by our partners Microsoft and Davis Wright Tremaine.

In 2022, ProJourn, a network of pro bono law firm attorneys and corporate counsel, expanded from California and Washington state to Georgia, Texas, North Carolina, and New York. This program to connect local media with free local counsel is already having a profound impact.

With the help of ProJourn lawyers, Open Vallejo published a major investigation uncovering how senior city officials intentionally destroyed evidence related to six police shootings in Vallejo, California.

ProJourn also secured pro bono counsel for Investigate Midwest’s report on a congressional investigation into working conditions at meatpacking plants during the pandemic that led to hundreds of worker deaths.

The Reporters Committee’s local strategies make it possible to meet newsrooms where they are and provide the legal support they need. And with vital support from our individual and institutional donors, we can do it all at no cost to the journalists we serve.
The Reporter Committee’s fight to protect the First Amendment rights of newsgatherers is growing at the local level. But at the national level, as we have for decades, we continue to make arguments in federal courts to preserve press freedom for generations to come.

**PROTECTING JOURNALISTS**

In October, following years of advocacy by the Reporters Committee and newsroom leaders, the U.S. Department of Justice announced historic changes to its news media guidelines that strengthen protections for journalists.

The updated guidelines prohibit members of the Justice Department from using subpoenas or other investigative tools against journalists who possess and publish classified information obtained in newsgathering, with only narrow exceptions. They also bar efforts to seize records from, or of, journalists engaged in newsgathering more broadly.

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION**

We continue to protect journalists from law enforcement attacks on the free press. In November, we settled one of our longest-running lawsuits — a Freedom of Information Act case concerning the FBI’s impersonation of an Associated Press editor in 2007.

Through years of litigation, we pried loose records showing that the FBI failed to follow its own rules governing undercover operations involving impersonation of the news media.

Our lawsuit resulted in an important FOIA ruling that sets a high bar for the government to withhold records in this way again.

**TECHNOLOGY AND PRESS FREEDOM**

Through our Technology and Press Freedom Project, we are tackling some of the most challenging questions surrounding online speech and the threats of government interference that imperil all news media.

In Texas and Florida, social media censorship challenges are working their way through the courts and could potentially have huge implications for the news media.

In friend-of-the-court briefs, the Reporters Committee is highlighting the threat to precedent central to the independence of the press if states try to censor or moderate content on social media platforms.

The Reporters Committee honored leaders in journalism and law at the 2022 Freedom of the Press Awards in New York. The event raised more than $1.7 million to support and defend the free press for years to come.

**FREEDOM OF THE PRESS AWARDS SPOTLIGHT**

**KEVIN T. Baine**
Senior Counsel
Williams & Connolly LLP
Career Achievement Award

**AZMAT KHAN**
Investigative Reporter
The New York Times and
The New York Times Magazine
Catalyst Award

**WENDI C. THOMAS**
Founding Editor and Publisher
MLK50: Justice Through Journalism
Local Champion Award

**JUDY WOODRUFF**
Anchor and Managing Editor
PBS NewsHour
Career Achievement Award

**SAHAN JOURNAL**
led by Founding Publisher and CEO
Mukhtar M. Ibrahim
Rising Star Award
The Reporters Committee is deeply grateful to all those who support our legal work with individual gifts. The list below represents all individuals and households who gave $1,000 or more in 2022 and are recognized as part of our Leadership Circle.

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- The E.W. Scripps Company
- Forbes
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- The New York Times Company
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- Reuters
- TEGNA Inc.
- TIME USA, LLC
- The Washington Post

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- Gates Family Foundation
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- The IAC Foundation
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- Kirkpatrick Foundation
- The Klarman Family Foundation
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- The Narano Foundation
- Open Society Foundations
- The Panonica Foundation
- The Pethers Foundation
- Present Progressive Fund at Sclab Charitable
- Randall Family Foundation
- Rattner Family Foundation
- Robert R. McCormick Foundation
- The Steinman Foundation
- Stella P. Holt Charitable Fund
- Sustainable Grantmaking Partners Fund
- TEGNA Foundation
- Wall Family Fund

**LAW FIRMS**

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- Bryan Cave LeGoues Paisner LLP
- Cravath, Swaine & Moore LLP
- Davis Wright Tremaine LLP
- Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP
- Holland & Knight
- Rothwell Figg

**MEDIA COMPANIES**

- TIME USA, LLC
- The Washington Post

**NONPROFITS**

- Colorado Media Project
- The Freedom Forum
- Lancaster County Local Journalism Fund
- The Leffert Institute for Journalism
- Li Center for Global Journalism, Columbia University

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- Tennessee Association of Broadcasters
- Tennessee Press Association
- Virginia Press Association
- Wallace House Center for Journalists at the University of Michigan

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- Meta
- Microsoft
- Morgan Stanley Global Impact Funding Trust, Inc.
- National Basketball Association
- North Base Media
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- PNC Institutional Asset Management
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- The Washington Post
- Colorado Media Project
- The Freedom Forum
- Lancaster County Local Journalism Fund
- The Leffert Institute for Journalism
The following information is from the Reporters Committee’s Audited Financial Statement for the fiscal year spanning Jan. 1, 2022, through Dec. 31, 2022. Our operating budget for 2022 was $6,356,407.

**ANNUAL FINANCIALS**

**REVENUE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash and equivalents</td>
<td>$2,084,774</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions and</td>
<td>$1,459,908</td>
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<tr>
<td>grants receivable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepaid expenses</td>
<td>$72,004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL CURRENT REVENUE</strong></td>
<td>$3,616,686</td>
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</table>

**FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES, ACCRUAL BASIS**

<table>
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<th>Description</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grants and</td>
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<tr>
<td>contributions</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>receivable-long term, net of discount</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>$13,503,331</td>
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<tr>
<td>Property and</td>
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<tr>
<td>equipment, net</td>
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<tr>
<td>Operating lease</td>
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<td>right-of-use assets, net</td>
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<tr>
<td>Security deposits</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL OTHER ASSETS</strong></td>
<td>$17,184,881</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**ASSETS, LIABILITIES, AND FUND BALANCES, ACCRUAL BASIS**

**Current Assets**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounts payable</td>
<td>$39,559</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accrued expenses</td>
<td>$179,876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred revenue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred rent, current portion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating lease</td>
<td>$310,066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>liability, net of current portion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</strong></td>
<td>$529,501</td>
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</table>

**Other Liabilities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deferred rent, net of current portion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Operating lease</td>
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<tr>
<td>liability, net of current position</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>$3,010,778</td>
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**Liabilities**

<table>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating lease</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>liability, net of current portion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</strong></td>
<td>$529,501</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NET ASSETS**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Undesignated</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>requirements</td>
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</tr>
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<td><strong>TOTAL NET ASSETS WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS</strong></td>
<td>$9,041,955</td>
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<tr>
<td>With donor restrictions</td>
<td>$7,604,914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>$16,641,869</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
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<td>$3,616,686</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our work over the past 12 months would not have been possible without the generous support of our individual and institutional donors, many of whom are identified in this annual report. The Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. All contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. Copies of current financial statements are available on our website at https://www.rcfp.org/annual-report/. You can also receive them upon request by contacting the Reporters Committee at 1156 15th Street NW, Suite 1020, Washington, D.C., 20005 or by telephone at 202-795-9300.

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  - Los Angeles Times
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The Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press provides pro bono legal representation, amicus curiae support, and other legal resources to protect First Amendment freedoms and the newsgathering rights of journalists.

Donations to the Reporters Committee help 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 free speech and a free press, as guaranteed by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

**DONATE EASILY AND SECURELY AT RCFP.ORG/DONATE OR BY SCANNING THE QR CODE AT LEFT.**

Have questions about donating appreciated stock, donor advised funds, or other non-cash giving, or supporting the Reporters Committee in your estate plan? Email giving@rcfp.org and we’d love to talk through your options.
2022 BY THE NUMBERS
Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press

24,000+
Obtained more than 24,000 pages of public records

360+
Unsealed more than 360 pages of court records

500+
Resolved more than 500 calls to our free Legal Hotline

40
Filed 40 new lawsuits, representing more than two dozen journalists and news organizations

40+
Submitted more than 40 friend-of-the-court briefs, several joined by more than 30 news organizations

20+
Vetted more than 20 investigative articles, podcast episodes, and documentary films

200+
Quoted or mentioned in more than 200 news stories

12+
Published more than a dozen guest essays and op-eds

1,900+
Trained more than 1,900 journalists, media lawyers, students, and members of the general public