

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Robert R. McCormick Foundation to Fund Free Training
for Reporters at Seven Workshops Across the U.S.**

A \$710,000 grant to The Poynter Institute will fund seminars, Webinars, live chats and new online resources over two years for journalists, bloggers, educators and others.

ST. PETERSBURG, FL, Jan. 18, 2012 —The Robert R. McCormick Foundation announced today that a \$710,000 grant to The Poynter Institute will fund journalism training workshops, or Specialized Reporting Institutes (SRIs), as well as Webinars and other online resources for reporters over the next two years.

Poynter administers this training program for McCormick, and the two organizations have selected SRI hosts for this year to carry out training on these topics:

- **Iraq/Afghanistan war veterans return home**, straining government resources for veterans beyond capacity. (Hosted by the New England Center for Investigative Reporting at Boston University, which plans a workshop March 5-7 in Boston. Details at www.necir-bu.org.)
- **Covering globalization at the local level** -- beyond the G8/NATO summits. (Hosted by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, DePaul University and Poynter, which plan a workshop March 19-21 in Chicago. Details at www.poynter.org/training.)
- **Covering Super PACs**. (Hosted by the Sunlight Foundation, which plans a workshop April 21-22 in Washington, D.C.)
- **Stress, suicide and the economy – the recession and mental health**. (Hosted by Local Media Foundation (formerly Suburban Newspapers of America) and Associated Press Managing Editors, which plan a workshop this summer in Chicago. Details to come.)
- **Covering social protest movements in an age of social media**. (Hosted by California State University, Fullerton, and the Orange County Press Club, which plan a workshop in October at Cal State Fullerton.)
- **Covering school violence and discipline**. (Hosted by Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, which plans a workshop in October in Chicago.)

The Poynter Institute will host the seventh workshop funded by the grant, on a topic to be determined later.

Each workshop host also will conduct a Webinar on the topic on Poynter's e-learning site, News University (www.NewsU.org), create a page of reporting resources for NewsU and host a live chat on Poynter's website (www.Poynter.org). McCormick and Poynter will accept applications this fall for training hosts and topics for 2013.

“SRIs have documented impact as a valuable resource for journalists and news outlets constrained by budget shortfalls and dwindling resources for staff training,” said Clark Bell, McCormick Foundation Journalism Program director. “We look to Poynter’s expertise to extend the outreach and digital distribution of SRI content.”

Poynter and the SRI hosts will announce dates, locations and application instructions for each workshop as they become available. Participants attend for free, with grant funds paying their hotel and travel costs.

“The list of topics is so strong. These workshops are going to be really helpful to journalists in terms of depth and timeliness,” said Stephen Buckley, Poynter’s dean of faculty. “We look forward to working with McCormick and the seminar hosts to provide excellent training in person and online.”

This initiative supports the Robert R. McCormick Foundation’s commitment to ensuring that citizens have access to quality news content by providing resources and training to journalists. The ongoing transformation in the way news is reported and shared has created a need for specialized training for those whose work helps keep the public informed.

The Robert R. McCormick Foundation developed the SRI program in 2007 to provide journalists and others with subject-specific expertise and practical reporting training in key issues. This is Poynter’s second year administering the program. The training convenes a diverse group of journalists, often from small to mid-sized news organizations, plus educators for a program lasting two to three days. Participants represent all media platforms.

About the Robert R. McCormick Foundation

The Robert R. McCormick Foundation is committed to fostering communities of educated, informed and engaged citizens. Through philanthropic programs, Cantigny Park and museums, the Foundation helps develop citizen leaders and works to make life better in our communities. The Foundation was established as a charitable trust in 1955, upon the death of Colonel Robert R. McCormick, the longtime editor and publisher of the Chicago Tribune. The Robert R. McCormick Foundation is one of the nation’s largest foundations, with more than \$1 billion in assets. For more information, please visit www.McCormickFoundation.org.

About The Poynter Institute

Founded in 1975 in St. Petersburg, Fla., The Poynter Institute is one of the nation’s top schools for professional journalists and news media leaders, as well as future journalists and journalism teachers. Poynter offers training throughout the year in the areas of online and multimedia, leadership and management, reporting, writing and editing, TV and radio, ethics and diversity, journalism education and visual journalism. Poynter’s News University (www.newsu.org) offers journalism training to the public through more than 200 interactive modules and other forms of e-learning. It has more than 200,000 registered users in 225 countries. Poynter’s website, (www.poynter.org) is the dominant provider of journalism news, with a focus on business analysis and the opportunities and implications of technology.

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