
NEWS RELEASE

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NEW JOURNALISM FUND SUPPORTING NEARLY 50 LOCAL MEDIA ORGANIZATIONS PROVIDING INFORMATION ABOUT COVID-19 TO CHICAGOLAND COMMUNITIES

McCormick Foundation, MacArthur Foundation, Chicago Community Trust, Driehaus Foundation, the Polk Bros Foundation, and the Field Foundation provide more than \$425,000 in grants

CHICAGO, May 7, 2020 – The Robert R. McCormick Foundation, in collaboration with the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Chicago Community Trust, the Richard H. Driehaus Foundation, the Polk Bros. Foundation, and the Field Foundation, today announced 48 grants totaling more than \$425,000 from a collaborative Journalism Fund, offering immediate support for local media organizations working to disseminate information about COVID-19 to Chicagoland communities.

The Journalism Fund is providing local media organizations covering the public health emergency with grants up to \$10,000 to continue their coverage.

“COVID-19 is disproportionately affecting communities of color,” said Andres Torres, Democracy program officer at the McCormick Foundation. “Adding to the challenge, the communities that have historically suffered disinvestment have also been left out of prevailing media narratives, making it harder for community residents to get localized advice related to the pandemic to guide their decision-making. We’re hopeful these grants will keep community voice alive in neighborhoods around Chicagoland during these difficult times.”

Among the grantees are the following organizations:

- **The Triibe: Engaging Black millennials online, on social media** – According to Pew Research, younger adults are much less engaged than older adults with news on COVID-19 and their engagement has not increased as the crisis has worsened, while older adults have gotten more engaged. The Triibe is speaking directly to young people and people of color, where there has been greater skepticism of COVID-19 as a health threat.
- **City Bureau: Bridging the digital divide by sharing information by phone and text** – A nationwide survey of Latinos found that 37% have no regular access to the internet at home (17%) or can only access the internet via their phone (20%, nearly double the share for white people). By contrast, 79% of white people have home broadband. This makes the online distribution of resources, e.g. loan applications, grant applications,

relief programs, and other news, exclusionary. City Bureau is compiling resources into a comprehensive database and making it accessible via text messaging.

- **Cicero Independiente: Capitalizing on social media to engage Spanish-speakers** – The outlet is using Facebook to engage Spanish-speaking residents in Berwyn and Cicero to provide information on COVID-19 and related resources. The organization is the only hyper-local, bilingual outlet serving these communities.
- **Bronzecom: Using e-mail newsletter to synthesize and inform community** – Founder Raynard Hall has built a trusted following among neighbors on Chicago’s South Side who turn to him for news. He scans major news sources and selects pieces relevant for his constituency, imbuing them with an imprimatur of trust. He also supplements his curated content with original stories about goings-on in his neighborhood.
- **South Side Drive Magazine: Supplementing storytelling with action** – Journalists are often the first to hear what’s what, which during a crisis, helped founder Yvette Moyo secure and distribute 24,000 masks in her community and turned her magazine’s offices into a logistics headquarters to help marshal and direct resources in the particularly hard-hit South Shore Community. Moyo serves on the Mayor’s Racial Equity Rapid Response COVID-19 Task Force.

The Fund prioritized support for organizations with an operating budget of \$2 million or less and based in and principally serving residents of the Chicago region, with preference provided to outlets serving historically marginalized audiences, primarily people of color, and individuals speaking languages other than English. Each grantee organization must make the coverage they produce with these funds freely available to the public.

“Reporters are also on the front lines of this pandemic, risking their health and safety to bring accurate news and information to audiences,” said Kathy Im, Director of Journalism and Media at MacArthur. “Local philanthropy responded quickly to meet the basic human needs of Chicago residents. This fund acknowledges that community and ethnic media outlets are also providing an essential service for residents.”

Grant recipients in four categories include:

INFORMING NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS

1. EL Día Newspaper
2. Contratiempo
3. La Raza Chicago, Inc
4. Nicado Publishing Company
5. Cicero Independiente (fiscal sponsor: City Bureau)

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6. Puerto Rican Cultural Center (La Voz del Paseo Boricua)
 7. GMWDaily
 8. VOC Media LLC
 9. Korean News of Chicago Inc
 10. News Magazine Chicago
 11. Ako Radio
 12. Legend Media Network Group Inc
 13. Mediator Inc
 14. Public Media Institute
 15. Tsahim Urtuu North America
 16. Via Times Publication

INFORMING RESIDENTS IN LOCAL COVID-19 HOTSPOTS

17. Bronzecommm
18. City Bureau
19. Local News LLC (McKinley Park News)
20. Herald Newspapers Inc (Hyde Park Herald)
21. Invisible Institute
22. South Side Weekly (fiscal sponsor: Experimental Station)
23. Real Men Charities, Inc. (South Side Drive Magazine)
24. The Beverly Review
25. Shaw Media (The Herald-News, Joliet)
26. Growing Community Media (fiscal sponsor: Oak Park - River Forest Community Fdn.)
27. Free Spirit Media NFP
28. Hoodoisie (fiscal sponsor: Allied Media Projects Inc)
29. Strategic Human Services (North Lawndale Community News)
30. THE VOICE Newspapers
31. Village Free Press
32. Chicago Crusader Newspaper
33. Real Times Media (Chicago Defender)
34. Community Renewal Society (Chicago Reporter)
35. Hartman Publishing Group, Ltd (N'Digo)
36. MG Media (TBT News)
37. The Triibe

REACHING OTHER VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES IN THE REGION

38. Block Club Chicago
39. Chicago Reader L3C
40. Borderless Magazine
41. Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago
42. Rebellious Magazine for Women

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43. Windy City Media Group (Windy City Times)
 44. AirGo (fiscal sponsor: Allied Media Projects)
 45. Chicago Parent Magazine
 46. Juneteenth Productions
 47. StreetWise

SUPPORT FOR THE CHICAGO INDEPENDENT MEDIA ALLIANCE

48. Crossroads Fund

ABOUT THE ROBERT R. McCORMICK FOUNDATION

The Robert R. McCormick Foundation helps communities in Chicagoland and across Illinois develop educated, informed, and engaged citizens. Through philanthropic grantmaking and Cantigny Park, the Foundation works to strengthen our democracy, and to help ensure that people, especially children, have equitable access to the opportunities they need to flourish. The McCormick Foundation, among the nation's largest foundations with more than \$1.5 billion in assets, was established in 1955 upon the death of Col. Robert R. McCormick, the longtime editor and publisher of the Chicago Tribune. Find out more at www.mccormickfoundation.org.

ABOUT THE JOHN D. AND CATHERINE T. MACARTHUR FOUNDATION

The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation supports creative people, effective institutions, and influential networks building a more just, verdant, and peaceful world. MacArthur is placing a few big bets that truly significant progress is possible on some of the world's most pressing social challenges, including [over-incarceration](#), [global climate change](#), [nuclear risk](#), and [corruption in Nigeria](#). In addition to the [MacArthur Fellows Program](#), the Foundation continues its historic commitments to the role of [journalism](#) in a responsible and responsive democracy, as well as the strength and vitality of our headquarters city, [Chicago](#). More information is at www.macfound.org.

ABOUT THE CHICAGO COMMUNITY TRUST

The Chicago Community Trust is a community foundation dedicated to strengthening the Chicago region and improving the lives of the people who call it home. For more than 100 years, the Trust has served as a trusted philanthropic partner, connecting the generosity of donors with community needs by making grants to nonprofit organizations working to create lasting change. Following the creation of a new strategic plan in 2019, the Trust stands committed to addressing Chicago's legacy of systemic inequity and closing the racial and ethnic wealth gap, while continuing to respond to the critical needs of our most vulnerable residents. The Trust administers more than \$360 million in annual grant making as part of its commitment to equity, opportunity and prosperity for the Chicago region. To learn more, visit www.cct.org.

ABOUT THE POLK BROS. FOUNDATION

Polk Bros. Foundation is a private independent foundation dedicated to building and strengthening Chicago's families and communities, especially those most affected by poverty. The Foundation focuses its work at the intersection of Chicago's most pressing issues to address the complex roots and devastating effects of poverty, challenge inequity, and ensure that all Chicagoans have the opportunity to reach their full potential. Since its founding in 1988, the Foundation has partnered with more than 3,000 Chicago nonprofits to build strong communities and families, increase access to quality education and the arts, improve health, and strengthen organizations and the sectors in which they work. Polk Bros. Foundation is one of the largest funders of Chicago nonprofits, granting more than \$25 million to nearly 400 nonprofit partners every year, and managing assets greater than \$400 million. Learn more at www.polkbrosfdn.org.

ABOUT THE RICHARD H. DRIEHAUS FOUNDATION

The Driehaus Foundation benefits individuals and communities by supporting the preservation and enhancement of the built and natural environments through historic preservation in neighborhoods throughout Chicago, encouragement of quality architectural and landscape design, and conservation of open space. The Foundation also supports arts and culture, investigative reporting and government accountability, and organizations that provide opportunities for working poor people. More information is available at www.driehausfoundation.org.

ABOUT THE FIELD FOUNDATION

Founded in 1940 by Marshall Field III, the Field Foundation is a private, independent foundation that has been dedicated to the promise of Chicago for more than 80 years. The Field Foundation aims its grantmaking toward the goal of Community Empowerment through Justice, Art, Media & Storytelling and Leadership Investment. With racial equity at the center of its giving, it directs dollars to critical organizations working to address systemic issues in Chicago and aims to directly benefit some of our city's most divested communities. Learn more at www.fieldfoundation.org.