



FIJ News, August 2020

Major Stories by Grantees Published This Month

From America's privatization of deportation flights to the impact of the coronavirus on at-risk children, our grantees published stories in August that illustrate how some funding and other resources can go a long way in uncovering the stories that need to be told.

New York Times: [They're children at risk of abuse, and their caseworkers are stuck at home](#)

In California and other states across the country, the COVID-19 pandemic is hampering the child welfare system. A patchwork of new rules and guidelines meant to slow the spread of the virus has relaxed requirements for face-to-face meetings between caseworkers investigating abuse and children, leaving vulnerable children out of sight and caseworkers stuck at home.

In their story, published in the New York Times, reporters at the University of California, Berkeley, Graduate School of Journalism, with a grant from FIJ, reveal the crisis in our child welfare system, which has left scores of investigations into allegations of child abuse or neglect sharply curtailed.

[Read the full report here.](#)

Miami Herald: [Florida companies are cashing in on deportation flights — about \\$35,000 per deportee](#)

There is a growing unit of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, called ICE Air, which is increasingly using private charter planes to transport immigrants around the country and the world.

FIJ Diversity Fellow Angelika Albaladejo interviewed former deportees, advocates and lawyers to detail the opaque nature of the private charter system in which lax oversight could contribute to a proliferation of waste and misconduct.

[Click here to read the full report.](#)

InvestigateWest and The Atlantic: [Trump appointees short-circuited grid modernization to help the coal industry](#)

A National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) study that demonstrated how a modernized American power grid could accelerate the growth of wind and solar energy and reduce reliance on coal was suppressed by Trump appointees in order to help the coal industry, according to FIJ grantee Peter Fairley's report for InvestigateWest, also published in The Atlantic.

The study, as Fairley reports, was politically dangerous territory for a federally funded lab while coal-industry advocates — and climate change deniers — reign at the White House.

[Click here to read the full report.](#)

USA Today: [Public colleges hide identities of donors who seek to influence students. Will COVID-19 make it worse?](#)

The pandemic has presented universities a triple whammy: Reduced tax revenues slashing government support, online-only courses gutting dormitory and cafeteria revenues, and – with more students and families out of work – less ability to offset those losses with tuition increases.

FIJ grantee Miranda Spivack's report, published in USA Today, details how the pandemic's economic impact on universities could create more secrecy behind the donors who seek to influence students.

[Click here to read the full report.](#)

The New Humanitarian: [US asylum shutdown leaves LGBTQ+ people stranded and in danger in Mexico](#)

For five months, President Donald Trump's administration has closed and blocked asylum at the U.S.-Mexico border, leaving countless asylum seekers dangerously and indefinitely stuck, without a clear path forward, as grantee William Martin reports for The New Humanitarian.

Martin's article and 10-minute documentary follows the story of 20-year-old transgender migrant Alejandra and her journey to find asylum in the U.S.

[Click here to read the full report.](#)

Grant Deadlines

The deadline for our regular grant application period (for coverage on any topic) is September 14. [Learn more and apply.](#)

We are offering emergency rolling grants of up to \$10,000 for investigative reporters working on stories related to police misconduct and the coronavirus pandemic. [Learn more and apply](#)

for rolling grants [here](#) (for coronavirus coverage) and [here](#) (for coverage of police misconduct).

We're Hiring a Program Associate (part-time, with benefits)

In its 51st year, the Fund is expanding its reach and impact, and it seeks a part-time program associate to help support this growth. The program associate is a critical support role, responsible for maintaining administrative systems and [records](#), tracking grants and projects, and drafting material. The program associate reports to the executive director.

[Click here](#) to learn more and apply.



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