



Friends,

In 2020, the Fund for Investigative Journalism provided grants and other support for 48 new investigative projects, more than at any other time in our history. And we'll do even more next year, because the need has never been greater.

The Fund was created in 1969 with a mission that's simple, unique and timeless: To provide funding and other support directly to journalists so that they can produce investigative stories that have an impact.

For 51 years, we've been driven by the belief that strong journalism is the backbone of a strong democracy – and that if you want to support journalism, you have to support *journalists*.

I'm writing today to share a short update on our work in 2020 and to ask you to consider making a year-end donation to support investigative journalists in 2021.

[Please click here to donate today.](#)

The need to support independent journalists has grown significantly in just the last year. Here is a quick overview of how we're meeting that need:

- We provided 48 grants to investigative journalists or teams of reporters in 2020
- We expanded mentoring, legal help and training for our grantees
- For the first time ever, we launched emergency grant programs to provide rapid funding for investigative reporters covering COVID-19 and police misconduct
- Half of our 2020 grantees are women, and nearly 45% are journalists of color
- They're in 18 states, in every part of the country
- About two-thirds of them are freelancers; most of the others work at nonprofit media outlets
- About 40% received grants for national stories and 60% received grants for local or state coverage

Most importantly, stories published with our support are having an impact. In 2020 alone, investigative journalism we supported helped spark more than 15 changes to policies or practices and shaped the national discussion on critical issues including criminal justice, government transparency, civil rights and the environment.

Just five quick examples of our impact this year:

- Several thousand low-income, primarily Black homeowners in Michigan kept their homes because of a state law that was enacted after a series of [stories](#) about over-

taxation and foreclosure published with our support.

- Crews in Georgia removed soil with dangerous levels of lead from the yards of hundreds of families with young children after [stories](#) published with our support led to increased funding and action.
- The Washington State Legislature allocated funds for hiring and training and launched a year-long study after a [report](#) published with our support showed that Native American drivers in the state are far more likely to be stopped and searched than white drivers.
- Child-abuse caseworkers in California began making in-person visits during investigations and identifying children to remove from dangerous homes because [reporting](#) that we supported showed that COVID-19 protocols were hampering investigations and led the governor to reverse an earlier policy.
- Charter schools in the District of Columbia began holding open meetings after a story published with our support helped [spark](#) a new local law requiring transparency.

Here is an [index](#) of all the stories published in 2020 with our support.

Looking ahead, in 2021 we will provide grants to more reporters – both for deep-dive projects and timely investigations. We’re expanding the support we provide to grantees through our partnership with the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press and our mentoring program that pairs grantees with seasoned reporters and editors. We’ll expand the training and education we’ve begun providing for our past grantees and the broader field, including journalism students.

We have big plans, and we need your help. [Please click here to make a year-end donation today.](#) Together, we’ll support more high-quality, high-impact investigative journalism — when and where it’s needed most.

Thank you for your partnership,



Eric Ferrero
Executive Director
Fund for Investigative Journalism

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