First Amendment Awards
Honoring Champions of Freedom of the Press

March 16, 2016 | Grand Hyatt Washington | #RTDNFirst
Congratulations to the 2016 RTDNF First Amendment Honorees

Kathy Walker
News Director
KOA-AM
RTDNA Chairwoman

Amy Tardif
Station Manager & News Director
WGCU-FM
RTDNF Chairwoman

Vince Duffy
News Director
Michigan Radio
RTDNA Chair-Elect

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AccuWeather
RTDNA Treasurer

Dan Shelley
SVP, Digital Content Strategy
iHeartMedia
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Barbara Cochran
Washington Program Director
Missouri School of Journalism
RTDNA President Emeritus

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Brandon Mercer
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SFGATE
Region 2 Director

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KSL-AM
Region 3 Director

Scott Libin
Hubbard Senior Fellow
University of Minnesota
Region 4 Director

Scott Brady
News Director
KTVF-TV
Region 5 Director

Mark Willis
Reporter
Sirius XM Radio Inc.
Region 6 Director

Jam Sardar
News Director
WLNS-TV
Region 7 Director

Andrea Parquet-Taylor
News Director
WCNC-TV
Region 8 Director

Randy Bell
News Director
WMSI-FM/WJQO-FM/WJDX-AM
Region 9 Director

Andrew Vrees
News Director
WCVB-TV
Region 10 Director

Tim Scheld
Director of News and Programming
WCCB-AM
Region 11 Director

Mark Kraham
News Director
WHAG-TV
Region 12 Director

Terence Shepherd
News Director
WLRN-FM
Region 13 Director

Kym Geddes
News Director
CFRB-AM
Region 14 Director

Jerry Walsh
Director of Local Content Development
Noxstar Broadcasting Group
Director-at-Large

Kimberly Wyatt
News Director
WEAR-TV
Director-at-Large

Sean McGarvey
Managing Editor
WTVW-TV & WXIN-TV
Director-at-Large

Harvey Nagler
Vice President
CBS Radio News
Director-at-Large

David Louie
Reporter
KGO-TV
RTDNF Trustee

Janice S. Gin
Assistant News Director
KRON-TV
RTDNF Trustee

Mike Cavender
Executive Director
RTDNA/F
Program

Welcome
Mike Cavender
RTDNA/F Executive Director

Introduction
Amy Tardif
RTDNF Chairwoman

Special Memorial Tribute to Adam Ward & Alison Parker
Jeffrey A. Marks
President & General Manager, WDBJ

First Amendment Defender Award
Tim Tai
Photojournalist and Student, University of Missouri
Presenter: David Kurpius, Dean, Missouri School of Journalism

Master of Ceremonies
Pierre Thomas
Senior Justice Correspondent, ABC News

First Amendment Service Award
Robert Garcia
Executive Producer of Newscasts, National Public Radio
Presenter: Lakshmi Singh, Newscaster, National Public Radio

First Amendment Award
Jason Rezaian
Correspondent, The Washington Post
Presenter: Douglas Jehl, Foreign Editor, The Washington Post

Leonard Zeidenberg First Amendment Award
Cami McCormick
Correspondent, CBS Radio News
Presenter: Harvey Nagler, Vice President, CBS Radio News

First Amendment Leadership Award
Rich Boehne
Chairman, President, and CEO, The E. W. Scripps Company
Presenter: Ellen Weiss, Washington Bureau Chief, The E.W. Scripps Company

RTDNF Lifetime Achievement Award
Tom Brokaw
Special Correspondent, NBC News
Presenter: Deborah Turness, President, NBC News
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CNN Newsource is a proud sponsor of RTDNF. Two organizations committed to excellence in journalism.

WILEY REIN APPLAUDS TONIGHT’S DISTINGUISHED RTDNF FIRST AMENDMENT AWARDS HONOREES FOR THEIR COURAGE AND EXTRAORDINARY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Wiley Rein is proud to support tonight’s event and RTDNF’s commitment to the First Amendment, worldwide press freedom, and the public’s right to know.
ALISON PARKER & ADAM WARD

On August 26, 2015, Alison Parker and Adam Ward were on the air with a live remote during the morning news on WDBJ-TV, Roanoke, VA when both were shot and killed by a disgruntled former co-worker. A third person, interviewee Vicki Gardner, has recovered from her wounds from the same gunman.

As their deaths so tragically illustrated, danger in the field is not limited to war zones and riot scenes. In the months that have followed, the WDBJ news staff has worked hard to overcome the grief and sadness which followed the senseless deaths of Alison and Adam.

Tonight, RTDNF marks their passing and celebrates their short, but impactful careers with a special memorial commemoration.

TIM TAI
Photojournalist, Student, University of Missouri

Tim Tai is a photojournalist and University of Missouri student finishing his Bachelor of Journalism degree. Originally from St. Louis, he has interned at the San Antonio Express-News and Tulsa World newspapers. His work has been recognized by work has been recognized by College Photographer of the Year, the Associated Collegiate Press, the Hearst Journalism Awards and the Missouri Press Association.
HEARST television

Congratulates the 2016 RTDNF Honorees

Tom Brokaw
Lifetime Achievement Award

Rich Boehne
First Amendment Leadership Award

Robert Garcia
First Amendment Service Award

Cami McCormick
Leonard Zeidenberg First Amendment Award

Tim Tai
Defender of the First Amendment

Jason Rezaian
First Amendment Award
PIERRE THOMAS
Senior Justice Correspondent, ABC News

Pierre Thomas is the Senior Justice Correspondent for ABC News. He joined the network in November 2000 and reports for *World News Tonight with David Muir*, *Good Morning America*, *Nightline* and other ABC News programs.

Thomas was a key member of ABC’s team of correspondents covering the terrorist attacks of September 11 and he continues to report on all aspects of the aftermath of those attacks. The network’s coverage of the 9-11 tragedy was widely recognized for its excellence, winning the prestigious Peabody and Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Awards and an Emmy Award. Thomas also participated in a “World News Tonight with Peter Jennings” broadcast which won the Edward R. Murrow Award for best newscast in 2005. He was a key part of the ABC News team honored with two additional Murrow Awards in 2012 for the network’s coverage of the tragic Tucson shooting and the killing of Osama Bin Laden, and in 2014 for ABC’s coverage that included the Boston marathon terrorist attacks. Thomas was named the recipient of the RTDNA 2015 John F. Hogan Distinguished Service Award, which is named after the organization’s founder and first president and honors contributions to journalism and freedom of the press. Also in 2015, he was singular in interviewing the Attorney General, FBI director and Secretary of Homeland Security in less than four months.

Thomas received an Emmy Award as part of team coverage of the inauguration of President Barack Obama and, in 2011, the Houston Association of Black Journalists honored him with its Pinnacle Award. He was recently featured in the American Journalism Review, and in 2011 was the focus of an hour-long C-SPAN broadcast about his career and thoughts on journalism. In 2012 Thomas was named Journalist of the Year by the National Association of Black Journalists.

A former Washington Post reporter who took the lead on such significant stories as the Oklahoma City bombing and the FBI’s role at Ruby Ridge, Thomas joined CNN as Justice Department correspondent in 1997. He broke news on many fronts, including terrorism, cyber-crime, the hunt for Osama bin Laden, the FBI’s Most Wanted list and the Justice Department’s involvement in the Elian Gonzalez case. He has received the Pass Award from the National Council on Crime and Delinquency for his article “Beyond Grief and Fear,” has twice won the Mort Mintz Investigative Award and was a finalist for the Livingston Young Journalist Award.

Thomas joined the Washington Post in 1987 covering local Virginia politics as well as the court and police beats in Prince William County and the city of Alexandria. In 1991 he joined the Metro projects staff and was part of a team whose work was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize for reporting on illegal gun use in the Washington, DC region. Thomas started his career at The Roanoke Times and World-News. He is a graduate of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and is a member of the National Association of Black Journalists. Thomas currently serves on the steering committee for the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press.
TEGNA Media is proud to have been Tom Brokaw’s broadcast partner in millions of homes across America for 40 years and counting.

CONGRATULATIONS TOM, AND ALL OF TONIGHT’S HONOREES.
Robert Garcia has been practicing journalism for 38 years, 25 of them in executive management. He has been Executive Producer of the Washington Bureau of CBS Radio, Vice President and General Manager of the CNN Radio network, Washington Bureau Chief and then Director of News Coverage for ABC News Radio, and currently serves as the Executive Producer of the Newscast division of National Public Radio.

With 24 million weekly listeners, NPR newscasts are the most widely heard content in public radio. Robert began his career as a reporter and anchor at WAGE-AM radio, a small station with a great local news department in Leesburg, Virginia before moving on to be an anchor and reporter at WMZQ-FM in Washington, D.C. He anchored some 10,000 newscasts in morning-drive at WLTT Radio, the CBS owned and operated FM station in Washington while moonlighting as a reporter for CBS Radio in the afternoons.

In 2000, Robert was elected Chairman of RTNDA and served as the Chairman of the Foundation the following year.
Congratulations to
The Washington Post’s Jason Rezaian
and all recipients of the 26th annual
First Amendment Awards

#JasonIsFree

The Washington Post
JASON REZAIAN
Correspondent, The Washington Post

Jason Rezaian served as The Washington Post's correspondent in Tehran from 2012 to 2016. He spent 545 days unjustly imprisoned by Iranian authorities until his release in January 2016. Prior to his arrest, Rezaian covered all aspects of Iranian life, from politics to foreign policy and social issues. He reported on topics like the election of President Hassan Rouhani, the country's historic nuclear talks, the declining birth rate and the country's response to drug addiction, among others. One of his last stories before his arrest explored the growing popularity of baseball in Iran, profiling the country's little-known national team.

Before joining The Post, Rezaian contributed articles to a range of publications including the San Francisco Chronicle, GlobalPost, Slate and Monocle. While many of these reports covered breaking and political news, many others attempted to take readers into an Iran they did not know, challenging longstanding assumptions and opinions about that country.

Rezaian moved to Tehran in May 2009, just weeks before the contested re-election of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. As was the case with most foreign correspondents working in Iran at the time, Rezaian was advised to leave the Islamic Republic. After returning later that year, he became one of the few American nationals to report from Iran. Rezaian worked there as an accredited reporter on a permanent basis until his arrest in July 2014.

Rezaian began traveling to Iran in 2001 and made several reporting trips there until he relocated to the country in 2009. In the intervening years, he worked in his family's California-based Persian rug importing business which helped him develop an understanding of Iran's business culture and gave him unique insight into the many layers of Iranian society. These experiences greatly influenced his work in Iran as a reporter.

Rezaian, who holds a dual U.S.-Iranian citizenship, was born in San Francisco and was raised in Marin Country, California where he currently resides. He is a graduate of Eugene Lang College of the New School University in New York City.
Cami McCormick
Recipient of
The RTDNF Leonard Zeidenberg
First Amendment Award

Congratulations from
Your Friends and Colleagues at
CBS News
CAMI MCCORMICK
Correspondent, CBS Radio News

Cami McCormick joined CBS News in September, 1998. She has won numerous awards for her reporting on some of the biggest stories since that time. She was at Ground Zero in New York on September 11, 2001, in New Orleans when Hurricane Katrina struck, and in Havana in August of 2015 when the U.S. flag was raised over the American Embassy for the first time in 54 years.

McCormick served nine tours in Iraq during the war, embedded with American troops as well as covering the trial of Saddam Hussein. She was embedded with U.S. forces throughout Afghanistan before being injured in an IED explosion in August, 2009 in Logar province. She suffered extensive injuries and spent a year in the hospital. Since then she has traveled to over 20 countries, including Afghanistan, Iraq, the Korean DMZ and Ukraine.

McCormick spent much of 2014 in Ukraine, and was there when Crimea was annexed by Russia. She returned to eastern Ukraine when Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 was shot down in July of 2014.

She reported from the Middle East for many years. She was in Ramallah for the funeral for Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and the West Bank during the Israeli incursions of 2001.

Early in McCormick’s career, she covered the fall of the Berlin Wall and the break-up of the Soviet Union. In the early 1990’s, she lived and worked as a reporter in Moscow and was one of the first English-language hosts on a commercial radio station in Russia. She traveled to Northern Ireland several times to report on that conflict and was there when the Good Friday Peace Accord was approved in 1998.

Prior to CBS, McCormick worked for CNN, CNN International, Headline News and CNNRadio. She reported on the death of Princess Diana from London and the deployment of U.S. troops to Bosnia.

She also developed, anchored and produced CNN Radio’s first international newscast, The CNN Radio World News Report. Heard in more than 100 countries, it was the winner of the Edward R. Murrow award for “Best Network Newscast” in 1998.

McCormick has been the personal recipient of six Edward R. Murrow awards and a contributor to more than a half a dozen others. Other honors include three AWRT “Gracie Allen Awards” for September 11th, Iraq and Afghanistan war coverage, two Associated Press Awards, a 2008 National Headliner award for the series: Katrina: Two Years Later, A 2010 National Headliner Award for coverage of Afghanistan, a CableAce Award for reporting on Boris Yeltsin’s re-election as Russian President and a Sigma Delta Chi Award for her coverage of Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath.
NAB Congratulates RTDNF’s First Amendment Awards Honorees

The National Association of Broadcasters congratulates the recipients of the Radio Television Digital News Foundation’s First Amendment Awards. NAB is deeply grateful for your commitment to high journalistic standards and to protecting the principles of the First Amendment, ensuring Americans’ right to know.

CONGRATULATIONS

to all the honorees of the 2016 RTDNF First Amendment Awards, including SAG-AFTRA members Tom Brokaw, Robert Garcia and Cami McCormick.
CONGRATULATIONS
RICH BOEHNE

FIRST AMENDMENT LEADERSHIP AWARD

Rich Boehne is a former newspaper reporter who rose to the top of one of America’s most entrepreneurial journalism enterprises by championing a mission-focused culture. During his tenure, he has committed the company’s resources to supporting diverse voices and battling for open public records in local media markets across the nation.
CONGRATS
RICH

CONGRATULATIONS
TO OUR COLLEAGUE
RICH BOEHNE
A proven leader, mentor, visionary and friend!
Rich Boehne, 59, is chairman of the board, president and CEO of The E.W. Scripps Company.

Scripps is a news industry pioneer that today is a leading builder of journalism businesses for digital-age consumers. Under Rich’s leadership, the company’s strategy is built upon a deep commitment to public service, best captured through the company’s well-known motto: “Give light and the people will find their own way.”

In its current configuration, Scripps is among the nation’s largest operators of local television stations and local digital news brands, a producer of TV programming and owner of a growing portfolio of national digital brands, including the over-the-top news network, Newsy. It also operates one of the largest podcast networks, under the Midroll brand, as well as owning a national political and investigative news operation in Washington, D.C., and The Scripps National Spelling Bee.

Rich began his media career in high school selling subscriptions for the Cincinnati Post, a Scripps newspaper, and later became a part-time reporter for The Cincinnati Enquirer.

After graduating from Northern Kentucky University with a bachelor’s degree in communications/journalism in 1981, he joined a growing chain of community newspapers. He returned to The Cincinnati Post – and Scripps – as a reporter and editor covering primarily business-related topics and the capital markets.

Rich joined the Scripps corporate staff in 1988 as manager of investor relations, just before the parent company’s initial public offering. He went on to become director of all of the company’s communications efforts. He also joined the long-range strategic planning and development group. In May 1995 he was named a vice president and in 1999 was elected the corporation’s executive vice president.

In 2006 Rich was named chief operating officer of the enterprise, which then also included HGTV, Food Network and the other cable and digital business that Scripps had built or acquired. In 2008 those business were spun off into a separate publicly traded company, Scripps Networks Interactive.

At the time of the separation, Rich was named president and CEO of The E.W. Scripps Company and began refocusing the company on local media, the future of journalism and expansion into digital media platforms.

In 2013, the board elected Rich as chairman.

In addition to his work at Scripps, Rich is a member of the board of directors of The Associated Press, the world’s leading news organization.

He also is a member of the Northern Kentucky University Board of Regents. In 2001 the university named Rich as its Outstanding Alumnus.

He is a past chairman of the Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber of Commerce and today serves on the board of Cintrifuse, a platform for connecting the Greater Cincinnati region’s high-potential, venture-backable startup companies to advice, talent, funding, and customers.
salutes Tom Brokaw on receiving the 2016 Lifetime Achievement Award

Congratulations on this distinguished honor, and an outstanding legacy.
TOM BROKAW
Special Correspondent, NBC News

Tom Brokaw has spent his entire distinguished journalism career with NBC News beginning in 1966 in the Los Angeles bureau where he covered Ronald Reagan’s first run for public office, the rise of the Sixties counter culture, the assassination of Bobby Kennedy and the 1968 presidential campaign.

From Los Angeles, Brokaw went to Washington as the White House correspondent during Watergate and as the principal back up for John Chancellor as anchor of NBC Nightly News. Next stop: New York and the Today Show followed by his appointment as anchor and managing editor of NBC Nightly News with Tom Brokaw.

He took over Meet the Press for the 2008 campaign when his close friend and colleague Tim Russert died.

In addition to his daily newsgathering responsibilities, Brokaw reported on more than thirty documentaries covering subjects ranging from AIDS, Los Angeles gangs, race, education, medicine, immigration and global warming.

He has an impressive list of firsts, including the first interview with Mikhail Gorbachev; the first network report on human rights abuses in Tibet accompanied by an exclusive interview with the Dali Lama; the only American network anchor to report from Berlin the night the Berlin wall came down.

In 1998 Brokaw published his first book, The Greatest Generation, one of the most popular nonfiction books of the 20th century. He followed that with six other books, including Boom! Voices of the Sixties, The Time of Our Lives, and, most recently, A Lucky Life Interrupted: A Memoir.

He is also a popular essayist for publications ranging from The New York Times to Rolling Stone and a wide assortment of other periodicals and newspapers.

In 2002, Brokaw received then-RTNDA’s highest honor, the Paul White Award, for his lifetime achievements in journalism. Brokaw has won every major award in his craft, including Peabody, Duponts, Emmys and lifetime achievement recognition. In November of 2014 Brokaw was awarded the Medal of Freedom by President Barack Obama, the highest civilian award given to those who made “meritorious contribution to the security or national interests of the United States, world peace, cultural or other significant public or private endeavors.”

Brokaw is on Twitter at @tombrokaw.
SAVING THE DAY, SINCE 1909!

To become a member and join thousands of journalists in our fight, please visit spj.org.
CONGRATULATIONS TOM

ON YOUR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

FROM JEFF ZUCKER AND YOUR FRIENDS AT CNN
CONGRATULATIONS TO THIS YEAR’S FIRST AMENDMENT AWARD HONOREES FOR YOUR SERVICE TO NEWS JOURNALISM.

Knight Foundation congratulates tonight’s RTDNA honorees. Thanks for your commitment to press freedom.

Knight Foundation supports transformational ideas that promote quality journalism, advance media innovation, engage communities and foster the arts. The foundation believes that democracy thrives when people and communities are informed and engaged.

Jason Rezaian, The Washington Post
Tom Brokaw, NBC News
Cami McCormick, CBS News
Robert Garcia, NPR
Rich Boehne, EW Scripps Company
Tim Tai, University of Missouri

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Past Honorees

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
2016 - Tom Brokaw
2015 - Bob Simon
2014 - Bill Plaanne
2012 - Andy Rooney

FIRST AMENDMENT AWARD
2016 - Jason Rezaian
2015 - James E. Risen
2014 - The Associated Press
2013 - Twitter
2012 - Jim Bohannon
2010 - Barbara Cochran & Marcellus Alexander
2009 - John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
2008 - Richard Wiley

LEONARD ZEIDENBERG FIRST AMENDMENT AWARD
2016 - Cami McCormick
2015 - Ann Compton
2014 - Lester Holt
2013 - Candy Crowley
2012 - Martha Raddatz
2011 - Wolf Blitzer
2010 - Brian Williams
2009 - Cokie Roberts
2008 - Bob Schieffer
2007 - Bob Woodruff and Kimberly Dozier
2006 - Gwen Ifill
2005 - Ed Bradley
2004 - Andrea Mitchell
2003 - Judy Woodruff
2002 - Sam Donaldson
2001 - Jim Lehrer
2000 - Diane Sawyer
1999 - Christiane Amanpour
1998 - Mike Wallace
1997 - Jane Pauley
1996 - Carole Simpson
1995 - Walter Cronkite
1994 - David Brinkley
1993 - John Chancellor
1992 - James Snyder

FIRST AMENDMENT SERVICE AWARD
2016 - Robert Garcia
2015 - Perry Sook
2014 - Robin Sproul
2013 - Lloyd Siegel
2012 - Marci Burdick
2011 - Susana Schuler
2010 - Harvey Nagler
2009 - Susan Grant
2008 - Paula Madison
2007 - Philip S. Balboni
2006 - William Wheatley
2005 - Wendy Walker Whitworth
2004 - Walter Ulloa
2003 - Susan Zirinsky
2002 - Fred Young
2001 - Gary Wordlaw
2000 - Lee Giles

FIRST AMENDMENT LEADERSHIP AWARD
2016 - Rich Boehne
2015 - Kathleen Kirby
2014 - David Lougee
2013 - Robert Decherd
2012 - Steve Capus
2011 - David Barrett
2010 - David Westin
2009 - Google Inc.
2008 - Tom Curley
2007 - Roger Ailes
2005 - Jim Keelor
2004 - Charles Grassey
2003 - Patrick Leahy
2002 - Floyd Abrams
2001 - Katharine Graham
2000 - R.E. “Ted” Turner
1999 - Bob Wright
1998 - Roone Arledge
1997 - Robert L. Johnson
1996 - Howard Stringer
1995 - Tom Johnson
1994 - James Quello
1993 - Frank Stanton
1992 - Allen Neuhath
The Radio Television Digital News Foundation thanks the many sponsors and supporters of the 2016 First Amendment Dinner. Your support helps RTDNF provide training programs, resources and scholarships for working and aspiring electronic journalists.

RTDNF is a 501(c) 3 charitable organization. Its programs are made possible through contributions from corporations, individual donors and foundation grants.

To learn more about how you can support RTDNF’s work please visit www.rtdna.org or call (770) 622-7011.

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RTDNA @ NAB 2015
RTDNA Nightcap - Tuesday, April 19 at 9 p.m. | Parasol Down at the Wynn Las Vegas

EXCELLENCE IN JOURNALISM CONFERENCE
September 18 - 20 | Orlando World Center Marriott | Orlando, Florida
excellenceinjournalism.org

RTDNA EDWARD R. MURROW AWARDS GALA
October 10, 2015 | Gotham Hall | New York City
6 p.m. Cocktail Reception | 7 p.m. Dinner & Show
rtdnaedwardrmurrowawards.org

For more information please contact
Kate Switchenko at (202) 662-7256 or katies@rtdna.org

For sponsorship and advertising information please contact Holly Rose at (856) 380-6890 or hollyr@rtdna.org
SAVE THE DATE

Edward R. Murrow Awards Gala

October 10, 2016, Gotham Hall, New York City
6:00 p.m. Cocktail Reception | 7:00 p.m. Dinner & Show
Congratulates Its 2015-2016 Scholarship and Fellowship Winners

2015-2016 Scholarship Winners

CAROLE SIMPSON SCHOLARSHIP
Ruben Garcia
University of Oregon

MIKE REYNOLDS SCHOLARSHIP
Zack Newman
University of Missouri

PRESIDENTS SCHOLARSHIP
Jenna Middaugh
University of Missouri

PRESIDENTS SCHOLARSHIP
Emily Schweich
University of Maryland

LOU AND CAROLE PRATO SPORTS REPORTING SCHOLARSHIP
Nicole Barros
Penn State University

GEORGE FOREMAN TRIBUTE TO LYNDON B. JOHNSON SCHOLARSHIP
Hector Perez
University of Texas at Austin

PETE WILSON SCHOLARSHIP
Max Darrow
Syracuse University

2015-2016 Fellowship Winners

N.S. BIENSTOCK FELLOWSHIP
Niha Masih
Columbia University

MICHELE CLARK FELLOWSHIP
LaCrai Mitchell
CBS News

JACQUE I. MINNOTTE HEALTH REPORTING FELLOWSHIP
Veronica Zaragovia
Freelance/KUT Radio
CAROLE SIMPSON SCHOLARSHIP

Ruben Garcia
University of Oregon

Ruben Garcia Jr. is a senior pursing degrees in journalism and advertising at the University of Oregon. Garcia possesses a multitude of skills and considers himself a jack of all trades. Although writing and reporting are his main fortes, he is also passionate about film production, fashion, and literature. Garcia has interned for ABC-affiliate KEZI 9 News and TrackTown USA. His work has been published in BBC, Oregon Public Broadcasting, and the Register Guard. After graduation Garcia hopes to work as a multimedia producer in Chicago or Los Angeles.

“I would like to thank Carole Simpson and the Radio Television Digital News Foundation for awarding me this scholarship. I am honored to be in the same company as Simpson and the other scholarship winners. Throughout my entire life, I’ve experienced many hardships, but knowing that people believe in me reassures me that I am capable of accomplishing my dreams. Carole Simpson paved the way for minorities in this industry. I hope to follow in her footsteps and set an example for future generations.”

MIKE REYNOLDS SCHOLARSHIP

Zack Newman
University of Missouri

Zack Newman is a junior at the University of Missouri majoring in convergence journalism with an emphasis in TV and radio. Zack considers himself to be a “multimedia storyteller,” and loves learning new media to produce content. He has used traditional equipment and an iPad Mini to tell stories. The Ellicott City, Maryland native is in the process of learning how to create and edit 3D videos for StoryUp Studios. Zack has extensive journalism experience. This includes work at Fox News in New York, ESPNU Campus Connection and KOMU-TV. While at Fox News, Zack helped provide national coverage of the events surrounding the November protests at the University of Missouri campus. Zack is also an alumnus of the Medill-Northwestern Journalism Institute and the WMAR-TV Teen Media Project. The Eagle Scout also enjoys improv, nature, food and fitness.

“Besides journalism, one of my major passions is facilitating cancer awareness by working with various organizations, including the Zaching Against Cancer Foundation and MizzouThon. I’m ecstatic that I can help keep the memory of Mike Reynolds alive and bring more attention to the fight against the horrific disease. This is a tremendous opportunity that I’m humbled to be chosen for. Thank you.”

PRESIDENTS SCHOLARSHIP

Jenna Middaugh
University of Missouri

Jenna is a Broadcast Journalism major with an emphasis in Radio/TV Reporter/Anchor and will graduate from the University of Missouri in May 2016 after finishing college in three years. She has worked at Columbia’s NBC-affiliate television station KOMU 8 since her freshman year. She worked her way up the ranks at the station. She started out answering the phones and checking the email as a desk assistant, along with writing stories for the website, KOMU.com, and managing the station’s social media pages as a digital producer. After her first year of school she started producing full newscasts and currently reports for KOMU 8. As a reporter, she’s a one-man-band: coming up with story ideas, interviewing sources, shooting b-roll, editing everything together and then fronting it live for the 5 and 6 o’clock news. She has also anchored various shows for the station’s morning, noon, 5, 6, 9 and 10 o’clock newscasts. Outside of KOMU 8, she reported for Columbia’s NPR-affiliate radio station KBIA during the fall of 2014 and interned at KMBC, a television station in her hometown of Kansas City, during the winter of 2014.

“I was so excited when I received the call from RTDNF. I couldn’t believe I had won! I am thrilled RTDNF recognized all the hard work and dedication I have put into my journalism career, and I am honored to be chosen as a winner of the Presidents Scholarship.”
Emily Schweich
University of Maryland

Emily Schweich is a senior broadcast journalism major at the University of Maryland Philip Merrill College of Journalism. She has worked as an anchor, reporter, producer and production crew volunteer for Maryland Capital News Service, the University of Maryland’s student-run news wire. Emily was the president of the Society of Professional Journalists’ 2015 National Outstanding Campus Chapter and has worked as a multimedia reporter for The Diamondback, the University of Maryland’s student newspaper. She has interned at the NBC News Washington Bureau and at WUSA9, Washington, D.C.’s CBS affiliate, and hopes to return one day to the nation’s capital to work as a television news producer.

“Receiving this scholarship encourages me to continue working hard in the broadcast journalism field. I respect the work RTDNA has done to protect the rights of electronic journalists and promote ethics in the field, and I am honored to be recognized by this prestigious organization.”

Nicole Barros
Penn State University

Nicole Barros is a junior majoring in broadcast journalism at Penn State University. The New York native grew up surrounded by sports and knew she wanted to pursue a career in the sports industry upon graduating college. She was selected to be a member of the John Curley Center for Sports Journalism at Penn State, through which she’s taken sports writing and broadcasting classes. However, Nicole says her experiences outside the classroom have greatly enhanced her sports reporting skills, as well. She served as a host and analyst on Penn State’s student-run sports talk show before becoming the Executive Producer. Nicole interned with the Big Ten Network Student U and WPSU-TV’s sports department during her sophomore year, covering Penn State division I athletics. In the summer of 2015, she was able to intern at a local station, News 12 The Bronx, covering high school sports, as well as the Yankees and Mets two days a week. The other four days, she was a newsroom intern at CBS New York. Nicole hopes to one day work in the sports industry, as either a writer, producer or broadcaster.

“Words cannot express how grateful and honored I am to have received the Lou and Carole Prato Sports Reporting Scholarship. Mr. Prato is such an important person in the Penn State community and the passion that we both share for our university makes receiving this scholarship that much more special. I am so thankful to the Prato family and RTDNA for selecting me for this prestigious scholarship that will help to further my education in the field of sports journalism and allow me to become more deeply involved in RTDNA. I will continue to work hard to accomplish my goals of becoming a successful sports reporter.”

Hector Perez
University of Texas at Austin

Hector Ivan Perez is a bilingual Broadcast Journalism student at the University of Texas at Austin. He was born in Bogota, Colombia, but moved to Austin at the age of nine. While at school, he’s reported and produced for UT’s Texas Newswatch, and has interned at several news stations in the Austin area, including KAKW Univision, KUT, KEYE TV, and KXAN. Hector takes pride on being able to report on a variety of subjects, and is excited to begin his career as a reporter and multimedia journalist.

“I’m beyond thankful to the RTDNA for this award. It’s an absolute honor to be recognized by this great foundation and to be associated with a scholarship named after two men who accomplished so much. For me it’s the perfect culmination to four years of hard work, both in the classroom learning from our great professors, and out in the world talking to people and reporting on real issues.”
Max Darrow  
Syracuse University

Max is a senior Broadcast and Digital Journalism major at the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications at Syracuse University. Born and raised in Menlo Park, California, he never quite realized how cold upstate New York would be! He graduated from Pinewood High School in 2012, where he was the editor-in-chief of the school’s paper, “The Panther Prints,” for two years. At Syracuse, he is a member of the all-male a cappella group, “Otto Tunes,” a brother of the Phi Delta Theta fraternity, and a news reporter and anchor at the student-run TV station, CitrusTV. Since his freshman year, Max has interned at KPIX-TV in San Francisco, WCAU-TV in Philadelphia, and KION-TV in Salinas. Working with both young and veteran journalists in three very different markets taught him so much about the craft. But his favorite part? Hearing their stories. Looking ahead, Max can’t wait to begin this next chapter of his story.

“I am extremely honored to be this year’s recipient of the Pete Wilson Scholarship. As an aspiring storyteller, this further fuels my passion for journalism. I hope that my journey will bring honor to Pete’s name. A huge thank you to the RTDNF for this opportunity, it means so much!”

Niha Masih  
Columbia University

Niha Masih is a television journalist and documentary photographer from India, specializing in reportage on human rights, conflict zones and investigations. She worked with India’s top English new broadcaster, New Delhi Television (NDTV), for four years. She spent three years reporting and producing the channel’s award winning ground reportage show, Truth vs. Hype and another year helming NDTV’s bureau in India’s largest state, Uttar Pradesh.

With Truth vs Hype, she travelled extensively across the country, covering a range of ground breaking stories – from ethnic riots to extrajudicial killings, from financial scams to farmer suicides. She had the chance to cover major international stories like the earthquake in Nepal, 2014 Gaza war, the struggle for democracy in Myanmar and Egypt and post-war propaganda in Sri Lanka. She is also an award winning documentary photographer, specializing in long form projects.

Niha is an English Literature graduate from Lady Shriram College, Delhi University and has a Journalism degree from Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. She is currently studying Politics and Global Affairs at the Columbia Journalism School, New York.

“I’m deeply humbled to receive the N.S. Bienstock Fellowship from RTDNF, which has been known to encourage work of journalists, from across the world, reporting on socially relevant issues often ignored by mainstream media. While being a part of the ‘developed’ India we know of, I am acutely aware of the gross disparities that exist in the country. This ultimately strengthens my resolve that I can try and make a difference through my work as a journalist.”
MICHELE CLARK FELLOWSHIP

LaCrai Mitchell
Florida A&M University, CBS News

LaCrai Mitchell is a December 2015 graduate of Florida A&M University in Tallahassee, Fla. Throughout her four years at FAMU she has accomplished a lot: In 2013, Mitchell co-produced a nationally-acclaimed news magazine show that won an Academy of Television Arts & Sciences’ student Emmy. In the summer of 2013, Mitchell studied abroad in Madrid where she completed her Spanish minor at the Universidad de Rey Juan Carlos. Last year, Mitchell interned with CNN in Atlanta, where she served as a CNN International Newssource intern. She also interned with CBS News in New York City for two consecutive summers as an Investigative Unit intern and a 48 Hours intern, respectively. This year, Mitchell was awarded two Knight Foundation Scholarships that enabled her to attend the 2015 Investigative Reporters and Editors Conference in Philadelphia and the 2015 Online News Association conference in Los Angeles. After graduation, Mitchell returned to New York to work for CBS News as a News Associate.

“Young, beautiful, talented, and an amazing storyteller—Michele Clark embodied everything that I aspire to be. Receiving this prestigious award means that I get to take the first steps in being a part of a legacy that was created by an admirable reporter whose life was cut short too soon.”

JACQUE I. MINNOTTE HEALTH REPORTING FELLOWSHIP

Veronica Zaragovia
KUT Radio, Columbia University

Veronica Zaragovia is a freelance public radio reporter who most recently covered state government and health care for KUT, the NPR member station in Austin, Texas. She’s reported as a legislative relief newsperson with the Associated Press in South Dakota and has contributed reporting to NPR, PRI’s The World, Here & Now, Latino USA, The Takeaway, the Agence France Presse, TIME in Hong Kong and PBS NewsHour, among others. She has two degrees from Columbia University, and a passion for learning languages and traveling.

“As the public radio community makes concerted efforts to diversify the voices on air, I feel so motivated and determined to continue my work as a Latina covering health care because of the Jacque I. Minnotte Health Reporting Fellowship, whose aims are so important to me. This recognition of my work enables me to continue seeking compelling public radio stories to tell about health care policy and innovation in medicine, while making sure to also include diverse voices in my own stories.”
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