



## NEW JERSEY CIVIC INFORMATION CONSORTIUM

### NEW JERSEY CIVIC INFORMATION CONSORTIUM GRANTS : 2021 TO DATE

- **Beyond Expectations, (Burlington County)** - 2021, 2022 (\$93,876), to launch and develop “be.tv eStudios,” an initiative teaching Burlington County students and young adults, ages 14-24, storytelling and media production skills with an emphasis on conducting interviews with professionals, business leaders, educators, etc., and using online gaming techniques for capturing and promoting interview highlights. It also teaches media and business skills and has involved students in organizing and staging esports tournaments and programs.
- **Blairstown Enhancement Committee, (Warren County)** 2021, 2022, 2023 (\$175,000), to address the loss of local-news outlets by launching the Greater Blairstown News Project online publication, The Ridgeview Echo, reporting on Blairstown, Frelinghuysen, Hardwick and Knowlton, all Warren County communities with no other dedicated local news sources. This effort provides residents with vital and timely government announcements about public health and safety, and foster greater connection to and awareness of local issues across northwest New Jersey.
- **The Jersey Bee, County (Essex County)** formerly known as Bloomfield Information Project, 2021, 2022, 2023 (\$200,000) to launch a community-reporter corps pilot program that trains residents in news gathering, writing, and production and provides paid reporting assignments that prioritize the information needs of underserved populations in the surrounding community, inspire civic participation, and build narrative power.
- **Movimiento Cosecha - (Union County)** 2021, 2022, 2023 (\$185,000), to work with Rutgers University to establish *Radio Cosecha*, a twice-weekly Spanish-language internet-radio program for the state’s Spanish-speaking immigrant community, telling the stories of seasonal agricultural workers in South Jersey. Cosecha researches and delivers important local, national, and international news in an accessible format, in order to achieve greater civic participation within New Jersey’s immigrant community.
- **The Conservatory of Music and Performing Arts Society, (Mercer County)** (\$35,000) to support Let My People Learn–HistorVic Education, a project that helps young people learn more about the workings of local governments and how policies and laws impact their communities.
- **Hammonton Gazette, (Atlantic County)** 2021, 2022, 2023 (\$91,565), to launch its Spanish publication, “Noticias”, making its news coverage more representative of Hammonton’s southern New Jersey community. The paper offers news articles in Spanish and initiates outreach to seasonal agricultural workers and more permanent members of the local Spanish-speaking community. It also funds freelance reporters to cover municipal meetings in news deserts in Atlantic County and Camden County. Noticias was the first local newspaper to offer news articles in Spanish (Mexican Dialect).
- **Hopeloft, Inc. (Bridgeton/Cumberland County)**, 2021, 2022, 2023 (\$160,000), to develop and implement each year a 15-week training and internship program for youth/citizens in foster

care and for children of incarcerated people to tell the stories of their peers for Hopeloft's local news site, Follow South Jersey. This grant was funded in part in the first year by support from New Jersey Health Initiatives (NJHI), a statewide grantmaking program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

- **If I Can, You Can Inc., (Salem County)** 2021 (\$35,000) [**GRANTEE DECLINED GRANT AFTER AWARD ANNOUNCEMENT**], to help revitalize the online neighborhood news franchise TAPInto.net in Salem County, with the goal of sharing news articles across New Jersey towns to create a more sustainable information ecosystem.
- **Newark News and Story Collaborative, (Essex County)** 2021, 2022, 2023 (\$210,000), to train residents, local reporters, and mediamakers to respond to Newark residents' information needs and concerns that capture the true essence of the city. Its lab comprises resident-reporters that produce unique coverage of issues impacting diverse communities in Newark that lack traditional media coverage and are not covered by traditional media.
- **Newark Water Coalition, (Essex County)** 2021, 2022, 2023 (\$134,930) to create Newark Community Voices, a digital-media and community-organizing training program for Newark youth. The program produces and distributes multimedia health and environment stories that center Newark community-information needs, with a focus on an oral history of the advocates who worked to clean up Newark's drinking water.
- **Old Bridge NJ Resident, (Middlesex County)** 2021 (\$35,000), to create a comprehensive and searchable archive of local-government activity spanning more than two decades. The project was completed and the tool made available to area residents and journalists.
- **Paterson Alliances, (Passaic County)** 2021 (\$33,000), to manage the library-based Paterson Information Hub to provide the community with training in citizen journalism and news-production technology. The alliance also aimed to convene local events to assess community-information needs.
- **Mental Health Association in New Jersey (Statewide)** 2022 (\$75,000), to conduct a research project assessing how community college students receive information on mental health services, key topics that resonate with them, and preferences on how they receive that information, and to identify the most effective ways to access services and stigma-breaking concepts.
- **Stories of Atlantic City, (Atlantic County)** 2021, 2022 (\$99,892), to pilot an initiative to train and pay community members as reporters covering the local city council, planning board, board of education, and casino reinvestment authority meetings, and to develop new ways to engage community members in the decision-making processes that impact their lives. Traditional journalism methods are not meeting the larger Atlantic City community's information needs.
- **Trenton Journal, (Mercer County)** 2021, 2022, 2023 (\$170,000), to train local contributors to increase the frequency of Trenton Journal's editorial output, help change the narrative, bridge information gaps, and connect communities in Trenton. The Trenton Journal focuses on addressing the disparities faced by the Black and Brown community in Trenton using solutions-based journalism via a newsletter, video, and audio stories.
- **VaccinateNJ.com, (Statewide)** 2021 (\$35,000) will add more features to its health information website to help residents statewide — including native Spanish speakers and others in

underserved communities — get real-time information about vaccination appointment locations and vaccine availability.

- **Asbury Park Media Collective (Asbury Park/Monmouth County)**, 2022, 2023 (\$112,600), to create an incubator for emerging community reporters and local media makers. The work the community reporters produce over the course of the training sessions — including news articles, news broadcasts for radio, news videos and documentary short subjects, podcasts, and social media posts — is published and disseminated through a website and a network of local media partners. The project has focused on live streaming city council and board of education meetings in Asbury Park.
- **Black in Jersey (Statewide)**, 2022, 2023 (\$140,000), to support the launch of Black in Jersey as a reliable news and information hub serving New Jersey's Black communities, and also to provide support for the organization's first statehouse and local government reporting cohort, and to launch its incubator program featuring Millennial and Generation Z-led news services — including the Hotspot Podcast.
- **Center for Cooperative Media at Montclair State University (Montclair/Essex County)**, 2022, 2023 (\$125,000), to launch the NJ News Commons Spanish Translation Service, partnering with the largest Spanish-language and mainstream media outlets in the state to translate statewide news — especially elections-related content and voter information — into Spanish. This project builds on previous pilot work around translating pandemic coverage.
- **Cranford High School (Cranford/Union County)**, 2022, 2023 (\$86,497.75), to grow the content, readership, and capacity of a fledgling digital journalism program and school-wide digital news source by integrating curriculum from varied elective courses and leveraging the expertise of a local college or university.
- **Front Runner New Jersey (South Jersey)**, 2022, 2023 (\$165,000), to support Front Runner New Jersey, a new site led by a veteran journalist who seeks to maintain and expand its coverage and bring a new perspective on the people, events, and issues making an impact on the African American and Latino communities in Atlantic City and South Jersey. Front Runner brings a restorative perspective to news and information reporting.
- **Lens 15 Media (Statewide)**, 2022 (\$50,000), to launch a news agency that produces accessible, multimedia reports for and about people with disabilities in New Jersey. This grant was funded in part by support from New Jersey Health Initiatives (NJHI), a statewide grantmaking program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.
- **New Brunswick Today (New Brunswick/Middlesex County)**, 2021 (\$35,000) [**GRANT RETURNED DUE TO CONFLICT POST-AWARD**], to launch an investigative project on the census, focusing on the immigrant and non-English speaking communities in New Brunswick. New Brunswick Today proposed to examine the extent to which those communities may have been undercounted in the most recent census and any resulting implications. The project intended to analyze the past three census counts to examine the effects of gentrification in the city.
- **New Jersey Center for Investigative Reporting (Statewide)**, 2022, 2023 (\$175,000), to build The Jersey Vindicator — the “ProPublica of New Jersey” — with the goal of engaging and empowering the public through investigative journalism at the local, county, and state level in its publication, ultimately ensuring that residents — particularly those in underserved

communities – are better informed about government, business, education, transportation, criminal justice reform, and the environment.

- **New Jersey YMCA State Alliance (Statewide)**, 2022, 2023 (\$135,000), to support an ongoing statewide storytelling project focused on documenting resident perspectives about COVID-19 vaccination. Insights have been incorporated into a digital and print “feature” for local dissemination with resident experiences, recommendations, and best practices for communicating about the vaccine in a community-centered, culturally relevant way that enhances access to documented stories, promotes information-sharing, and strengthens communities.
- **Radio Rouj & Ble (East Orange/Essex County)**, 2022 (\$40,000), to enable this online Haitian community radio organization to develop its own website, app, and weekly public service announcements, relevant to the more than 23,000 members of the Haitian community in Essex County. The project aim is to focus on translating and disseminating reliable information on civics, health, relevant news, and education and to create a platform where community members can address concerns and share experiences.
- **Saint Peter’s University (Jersey City/Hudson County)**, 2022, 2023 (\$140,000), to support Slice of Culture, a group of young BIPOC storytellers who are bringing civic engagement to Jersey City and Hudson County through a series of how-to projects and informational stories targeted to immigrant families and communities of color. It is opening doors to aspiring journalists who are committed to strong, local journalism and stories that matter to the community.
- **Unidad Latina en Acción NJ (Statewide)**, 2022, 2023 (\$150,000), to support the Radio Jornalera NJ Communication Project, which brings together the development, production and dissemination of public service announcements from the Jornalero and Domestic Laborer Communicators throughout the state. The Public Service Announcements are on topics that affect daily life, such as housing rights, workers’ rights, wage theft, health and safety at work, healthy lifestyle, and/or climate change.
- **WNET/NJ Spotlight News (Statewide)**, 2022, 2023 (\$150,000), to support a new Report for America corps member to expand health coverage by focusing on mental health in underserved communities, at the intersection of the COVID-19 pandemic, health inequity, and rural New Jersey. The 2022 grant was funded in part by support from New Jersey Health Initiatives (NJHI), a statewide grantmaking program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.
- **Center for Cooperative Media (statewide)**, 2022 (\$185,014), to fund a researcher at the Center for Cooperative Media at Montclair State University to conduct research on the New Jersey local news ecosystem. The researcher will also conduct learning and impact evaluation for the Consortium. Two-year grant.
- **Clinton Hill Community Action (Newark/Essex County)**, 2022, 2023 (\$150,000), to fund journalism training for neighborhood residents to learn how to use storytelling as an advocacy strategy. This includes oral histories, podcasts, video reports and documentaries. The funding also is being used to establish a new media training, production, and webcast center through Clinton Hill’s Citizen Journalism Program.
- **coLab Arts (New Brunswick/Middlesex County)**, 2022, 2023 (\$140,000), to fund a program in collaboration with New Brunswick Tomorrow to create a community-based memory and

story-telling project, Teatro Esperanza, in the Esperanza and Unity Square neighborhoods of New Brunswick.

- **Intersystemz (Trenton/Mercer County)**, 2022 (\$35,000), to fund the creation of a new community centered news platform covering Trenton, in partnership with COMPAS, Pod City Trenton, Kean University and The College of New Jersey.
- **New Jersey Council for the Humanities and Journalism + Design (statewide)**, 2022 (\$339,000), to fund the development of a statewide journalism training program in partnership with six New Jersey community colleges that equips citizens with skills to tell the stories of their communities. Journalism + Design and NJCH piloted a similar program in South Jersey in spring 2022. 18-month grant
- **Morristown Green (Morristown/Morris County)**, 2022, 2023 (\$100,000), to fund a paid internship program for this hyperlocal news site covering a robust range of topics in Morristown that include local government, arts and entertainment, crime, and sports.
- **Public Square Amplified (Newark/Essex County)**, 2022, 2023 (\$175,000), to fund a program to recruit, train, and promote community reporters and journalism students and provide an outlet for their work in Caribbean, African, Indigenous, and Immigrant communities.
- **South Jersey Climate News Project (South Jersey)**, 2022, 2023 (\$64,270), to fund stipends for student interns providing high quality news coverage of climate change in South Jersey, including the impact on the environment, agriculture, the Pine Barrens, beaches, tourism, and wetlands.
- **NJ Society of Professional Journalists (statewide)**, 2022 (\$35,000), **[GRANT RETURNED DUE TO INACTIVITY]** to fund a census of student journalists and journalism programs around the state, along with the development of a central database of scholastic journalism websites and publications. The grant will also fund student press identification cards.
- **Atlantic City Focus – Atlantic City (Atlantic County)**, 2023 (\$100,000), to fund a project to create a Civic Engagement Guide for Atlantic City that provides residents with a comprehensive directory of information on local elections, community resources, and leadership.
- **Camden Parent & Student Union (CPSU) – Camden County**, 2023 (\$100,000), to train Camden high school students in interviewing and media reporting so they can become community reporters and storytellers. The grant also will fund voter education programs and training.
- **DataSourceNJ Inc. (Statewide)**, 2023 (\$50,000), to develop from an operating prototype a repository to collect, clean, host, integrate, analyze, and present data and resulting insights to local investigative journalists, community activists, small businesses, academicians, and students.
- **VietLead, (Camden County)** 2023 (\$48,000), to hold neighborhood listening sessions in the 2023–2024 growing season through its Jersey Roots Youth Program, in collaboration with its Resilient Roots Farm Project, and to learn about what local issues are top of mind for its Black, Brown, and Southeast Asian neighbors who live, work, and play in East Camden neighborhoods.
- **Camden Fireworks, (Camden County)**, 2023 (\$64,460), to undertake a community-centered storytelling project in Camden documenting the challenges and opportunities of living a long,

healthful life amidst environmental injustice by interviewing, facilitating discussions, and documenting the personal narratives of community members.

- **Civic News Company (Chalkbeat Newark) – Essex County**, 2023 (\$100,000), to foster civic engagement in Newark public schools through: in-depth reporting on school segregation litigation and federal Covid relief spending; adding a state education policy reporting fellow; a texting service to inform the community about school board actions; a 2024 school board election guide; and first person student essays published through Chalkbeat Newark's Student Voices program.
- **Corporation for New Jersey Local Media, (Morris County)**, 2023 (\$86,459) to fund the continuation of the work of the Northern NJ News Collaborative on its "Stormwater Matters" initiative and will grow community engagement.
- **New Labor, (Middlesex County)**, 2023 (\$100,000), to fund the "Community-driven Journalism Project" to develop journalists, focusing on Black and Brown workers in low wage jobs across New Jersey.
- **Industry Media Arts, (Ocean County)**, 2023 (\$99,720) to fund a Journalism Mentorship Program that provides high school students with early awareness and readiness training for undergraduate collegiate journalism programs.
- **Montclair State University Foundation, (Statewide)**, 2023 (\$99,070) to fund the making of the 2023 NJ Statewide Voting Guide, which helped encourage civic engagement. Citizens also had an interactive opportunity to vote their choices on statewide and local issues.
- **Center for Cooperative Media, (South Jersey)**, 2023 \$100,000, to support the expansion of the South Jersey Information Equity Project (SJEIP) from a cohort of 5 to 10 fellows annually and establish an SJIEP community reporting workshop series to further engage local storytellers through intergenerational learning and co-creation workshops.
- **Muslim.co, (Statewide)**, 2023 (\$175,000) to fund a media publication centering Muslim news, with coverage affecting the New Jersey Muslim community. New Jersey contains the highest percentage of Muslims to the state population in the United States. The money also is helping Muslim.co expand its coverage of the Palestinian community in New Jersey, particularly in the context of the conflict in Gaza.
- **NJ Coalition to End Homelessness, (Statewide)**, 2023 (\$99,200) to support efforts to expand the reach and enhance the impact of Garden State Leaders, a statewide leadership and advocacy training program for New Jersey residents with lived experience of homelessness and poverty. The funds will enable them to formalize their ongoing statewide support and outcome tracking, and to pilot a local leadership program in collaboration with the Mercer Alliance to End Homelessness, for replication in other counties.
- **Wayne Hills High School, (Passaic County)**, 2023 (\$10,991), to fund the creation of a podcasting studio and support the digital journalism program for students in Wayne Township.
- **WNET NJ Spotlight, (Statewide)**, 2023 (\$100,000) to hire a Washington, D.C.-based correspondent to provide regular reporting to NJ Spotlight News and a collaborative network of newsrooms across the state on developments affecting New Jersey.
- **Central Desi, (Mercer County)**, 2023 (\$81,066) to fund a fellowship opportunity that will cultivate college students as future journalists in New Jersey and train them to report, write, and engage with local communities by covering the South Asian American community.

- **NJ Advance Media, (Middlesex County), 2023 (\$25,000), [RETURNED DUE TO INACTIVITY],** to fund the creation of a Journalism Talent Pipeline for aspiring journalists of color or from an underrepresented community. Nationally, journalists of color make up less than 17% of newsrooms and just 13% of newsroom leadership.