

AGENDA
SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
TIME: 9 A.M. – NOON
ROOM: PRESIDENTIAL CHAMBER A, MAIN LEVEL
THURSDAY, SEPT. 4, 2014
NASHVILLE, TENN.
STREAMED LIVE AT WWW.SPJ.ORG

1. Call to Order – *Cuillier*
2. Roll Call – *Fletcher*
 - a. Cuillier
 - b. Neuts
 - c. Fletcher
 - d. Kopen-Katcef
 - e. Albarado
 - f. McCloskey
 - g. Corry
 - h. Rogers Cook
 - i. Brett Hall
 - j. Fox
 - k. Tallent
 - l. Baker
 - m. Schotz
 - n. Koretzky
 - o. Gallagher-Newberry
 - p. Stevens
 - q. Radske
 - r. Sheets
 - s. Gallagher
 - t. Hallenberg
 - u. Matt Hall
 - v. Hernandez
3. Report of the SPJ President – *Cuillier* [2]
4. Under-30 task force recommendations – *Cuillier* [Page 6]
5. Advocacy Fund – *Cuillier*
6. Approval of Board Meeting Minutes – *Cuillier*
 - a. April 26, 2014 [Page 10]
 - b. July 28, 2014 [Page 33]
 - c. August 20, 2014 [Page 35]
7. Report of the SDX Foundation President – *Leger* [Page 40]
8. SPJ Vision
 - a. SPJ/SDX: Streamlining our strengths – *Leger/Cuillier* [Page 42]
 - b. SPJ torchbearers/Nebraska trial – *Puckey* [Page 45]
 - c. Updates since April Meeting
 - i. Advocacy efforts – *Skeel*
 - ii. Partnership meetings/developments – *Skeel*
9. Introduction of the 2014 Diversity Leadership Fellows and Harper Scholarship winners (if present).
10. Action/Discussion Items
 - a. Future spring board meetings – *Skeel*
 - b. Chapter action – *Puckey* [Page 48]
11. Old/New Business

- a. Communities update – *Neuts* [**Page 49**]
- b. Neuts Committee appointments – *Neuts* [**Page 52**]
- c. Recognition of retiring board members – *Cuillier*

12. Public comment period

- a. *Public can make comments prior to the meeting at www.spj.org*

13. Committee Reports

- a. ACEJMC – *Steve Geimann* [**Page 58**]
- b. Awards and Honors – *Andrew Seaman* [**Page 61**]
- c. Diversity – *Sandra Gonzalez* [**Page 62**]
- d. Ethics – *Kevin Smith* [**Page 64**]
- e. Freelance – *Michael Fitzgerald* [**Page 71**]
- f. Generation J – *Claudia Amezcua* [**Page 73**]
- g. Journalism Education – *Tallent* [**Page 75**]
- h. LDF – *Hagit Limor* [**Page 77**]
- i. Membership – *Neuts* [**Page 81**]

14. Executive Director Evaluation (Executive Session)

15. Adjournment

THE SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

**SEPT. 4, 2014
9 A.M. – NOON**

NASHVILLE, TN

STREAMED LIVE AT WWW.SPJ.ORG



IMPROVING AND PROTECTING JOURNALISM SINCE 1909

THE SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS IS THE NATION'S LARGEST AND MOST BROAD-BASED JOURNALISM ORGANIZATION, DEDICATED TO ENCOURAGING THE FREE PRACTICE OF JOURNALISM AND STIMULATING HIGH STANDARDS OF ETHICAL BEHAVIOR.

FOUNDED IN 1909 AS SIGMA DELTA CHI, SPJ PROMOTES THE FREE FLOW OF INFORMATION VITAL TO A WELL-INFORMED CITIZENRY, WORKS TO INSPIRE AND EDUCATE THE NEXT GENERATION OF JOURNALISTS, AND PROTECTS FIRST AMENDMENT GUARANTEES OF FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND PRESS.



SINCE 1909

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: Aug. 20, 2014
FROM: David Cuillier, SPJ President
SUBJ: President's Report
FOR: SPJ and SDX Foundation Board of Directors

OVERVIEW

I want to thank the dozens of committee volunteers, the staff, the board, and 7,500 members for moving SPJ forward this past year, building on the successes of previous years and advancing journalism in so many ways. I see SPJ accomplishments as efforts that take time – nothing substantial can be finished in one year. We have merely continued the work started by previous presidents and volunteers, and more is to be done in future years. It has been an honor to work with such amazing people, for such an important cause, in so many ways.

ADVOCACY

This year SPJ has ramped up its advocacy to new levels by fighting for press freedom for Connecticut open records, for Joe Hoseny in Chicago fighting a subpoena, for photographers arrested in Ferguson, for reporters vying with PIO controls, for student journalists at Otterbein, Georgia and elsewhere, for a federal shield law, for a better FOIA, including testimony in Congress, and for numerous other causes. Our efforts, in some cases, directly affected the outcome, others peripherally. Most of them created an amazing amount of media play and attention that I have never seen at SPJ. Not only have we been covered by organizations with agendas (Russian TV, Fox, Trucker radio), but we have achieved mainstream coverage through CNN, USA Today, New York Times, Washington Post, etc. We've done this through several ways:

1. Kathryn Foxhall created an advocacy coalition for the PIO issue that we will now be able to use for further advocacy and future Journo Blitz campaigns. People pay attention when 40 journalism groups speak out together.
2. Our use of social media has increased this year, and that led to some buzz. I anticipate this will only increase because of Dana's prolific use of social media and staff additions.
3. We continue to build partners in advocacy that have created synergies in the journalism world. Our SDX Foundation grant project with NPPA, our work with SEJ on EPA issues, and other collaborations have yielded fruit, and this will only grow. I will attend ONA in September to see how our groups can jointly further the mission.
4. The new communications strategist provides an avenue for SPJ to be a player when journalism news breaks. We saw that for the first time Aug. 19 with the killing of photographer James Foley. Jennifer Royer contacted me while I was working, drafted a statement, I added a quote, and we had it out the same day. Media outlets, particularly broadcast (including

CNN), contacted us immediately and we were part of the conversation while the story evolved.

I see our advocacy only building. Dana has asked me to serve as FOI Committee chairman this year to keep the momentum going and to groom a successor. We plan to continue building the journalism coalition and work on creating an endowed advocacy war chest. I am excited about what we can accomplish during the next 12 months, and next 30 years. The focus is on the long game, which we can win.

FEDERAL SHIELD LAW

Kudos to Paul Fletcher for his work this year dogging the federal shield law. Our organization helped get senators on board through mobilizing members to speak up and personal visits by me and others with senators who were undecided. To date, we have 56 senators supportive of the bill and need four more to overcome a filibuster. We will continue to push in September, probably the best window for a vote, or possibly after the elections. Senators who need pressure are: John Walsh (D-MT), Joe Donnelly (D-IN), Tim M. Kaine (D-VA), Bill Nelson (D-FL), Jack F. Reed (D-RI), Carl M. Levin (D-MI), and Ron Wyden (D-OR).

CODE OF ETHICS

The Ethics Committee and others have worked hard this year to solicit input and craft an updated code of ethics for delegates to chew on. While this process has been a bit more time consuming than I had planned, taking some energy away from my focus on advocacy, I think it has been worthwhile. People have been talking about the need to update the code for some years, and the process had to be initiated. Where it goes from here is not my call, but I am glad this has spurred national discussion about journalism ethics in today's ever-changing media landscape. That, in itself, has been worth the time. My thanks to Kevin Smith, the committee members, Joe for shepherding the process during the past five months, and everyone inside and outside of SPJ who have provided thoughtful recommendations. Ethics matter!

COMMUNICATIONS

This year we took a big step forward by hiring a full-time communications strategist, which I hope will improve member satisfaction, increase membership, and promote journalism. Already we are seeing the benefits on the advocacy end, but I hope we will also see improvements in our internal communications and our social media use. Also, this year I made it a priority to implement the transparency policy we created under Sonny Albarado's watch. That meant streaming board meetings live for the first time, and even recording and posting a Skype meeting. It also meant posting society documents online, including the budget. I feel strongly that if we are to hammer government hard on transparency then we must follow suit, even if we are not a government agency. It's the principle. It fosters credibility and trust with our members and the public, even if it can be a little messy at times. That's transparency.

COMMUNITIES

This year we launched the Freelance Community and, most recently, the Digital Community. The Freelance Community has had a little difficulty getting rolling – so much depends on a critical mass of active volunteers. We will continue to work on that. This idea, patterned after AEJMC’s “divisions” and common in other organizations, is something I feel strongly could help increase members and member satisfaction. John Ensslin initiated the discussion during this term when he studied the idea of affinity groups. We continued it, and Dana Neuts is working hard to add more communities and get them moving. Stay tuned!

NAME CHANGE

Last year the delegates instructed the board to talk about a possible name change, and we did. A task force led by John Ensslin studied the issue, gathered member feedback, and concluded that there isn’t broad support for a change. They also provided other suggestions that can help the organization address the needs of all our members. I agree with people who say the name change discussion is a bit of a distraction, and that we need to focus on our priorities. But I also think it’s not a bad idea to mull. It goes to the heart of who we are and what we want to be as an organization. I have always thought the organization should be the Society for Professional Journalism, although lately I even favor calling it simply the Society for Journalism. That is what we really are, and what our core mission is about. Strunk and White always urged conciseness in writing. Doesn’t get much more simpler than that. I anticipate this discussion will percolate for years, and I applaud Michael Koretzky for initiating that talk at EIJ13 in Anaheim. I wouldn’t be surprised if it comes up again in Nashville!

STATE OF SPJ AND ITS FUTURE

Thanks to Joe Skeel’s excellent management, with the board’s support, SPJ is perhaps the strongest it has been in years. Our budget is healthy. We have incredible training programs that are building journalism leaders and improving the craft. Yes, membership continues to decline gradually, and that greatly concerns me. We have issues to address:

- **The image:** We need to change perception that we continue to be a cliquish group of old print white guys chewing on cigars and drinking whiskey. Except for the whiskey part, that just isn’t the case. For my small part, this year I replaced the after-banquet leaders suite bash with a dance/gathering open to anyone. Also, while hotels set aside a swanky comped suite for the president as part of the package deal, I will stay in a normal room at EIJ14 and have SPJ use the suite for group meetings and gatherings. Small gestures, but all of our efforts can contribute to this change – including improving member services, diversifying our board, and creating innovative programming and training. This is important if we are to foster SPJ as the “people’s” journalism organization.
- **The reality:** SPJ, primarily through the SDX Foundation, provides amazing training and services for journalists, but I don’t think people realize that. It’s also imperative we develop new services for members to help them on the street with the issues they care about, which might include providing health care plans and career support. To strengthen journalism and society, we need to support journalists.

- **Diversity:** We need to create a much more diverse organization in every way – race, gender, age, medium, etc. This is something that is happening organically, and will continue with Dana Neuts as a freelancer, and in a few years with Lynn Walsh, who has incredible energy, ideas and skills in digital media. I also think SPJ must push hard for increased diversity in journalism as a whole. As an industry, we've backslid on that front, and that is unconscionable.
- **Function:** It makes a lot of sense for the SDX Foundation to pick up the education/training part of our mission so SPJ can focus on advocacy and member services. I think it is essential that SPJ takes the lead on fighting for journalism because it is falling in our laps. NFOIC no longer has the support it once had from the Knight Foundation. The Sunshine in Government Initiative faces cutbacks. Other groups struggle to raise money for annual expenses. We need a healthy war chest to provide sustained funding forever, because if we don't, nobody will. That will be my focus in my post-presidency, and I hope you all will support the cause. We have to do it together.
- **The Vision:** Joe's vision for SPJ is brilliant, and it will take time to evolve. This will require on all our parts the willingness to change and think creatively. If we cling to what we have always known for 100-plus years then we will slowly wither away and become irrelevant in today's journalism world. It is essential the board be willing to take risks – to examine the best way of serving journalists. Do we really need to be divided into regions? Do we even need members to help journalists? Maybe, maybe not. What role do chapters play in a world with dying Elks clubs? Can we create partnerships with other groups for mega EIJ conferences and administrative cooperatives? These are big questions, and I don't have the answers, we need to face it head on.

Thank you, everyone, for setting aside a part of your lives to help SPJ. Every person matters in this cause, and I am proud to know you and work side-by-side in making journalism, and society, better.



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MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 13, 2014
FROM: John Ensslin, Future of SPJ Task Force
SUBJ: Task Force report
FOR: SPJ Executive Committee

NOTE: Below is a memo prepared for the SPJ Executive Committee by John Ensslin. The Committee considered each of the items in the memo, and provided an "update" for the board of directors.

All great organizations need to renew themselves from time to time.

The Society of Professional Journalists has survived and thrived by adapting as needed in the past.

That time has come again.

The need to make SPJ more relevant to the next generation of journalists quickly became evident as the task force studied a potential name change.

Although we found no consensus on a name change, there was a surprising amount of agreement on the need to make structural and organizational changes geared to attracting and retaining younger members.

While we began by studying what would make SPJ more relevant to younger members, it is worth nothing that many of these changes will benefit members of all ages.

Items such as more and improved training, better job postings and more effective communications benefit all of SPJ.

With that in mind, here are our recommendations:

ORGANIZATION

- Accelerate the process of building communities within SPJ. The Freelance Community was a good start, but the process is too slow. Set a goal of establishing 3-5 more communities of journalists within the next year.

Update: Dana Neuts has made communities one of her top priorities during her presidency. She is already working on a Digital Community and Generation J Community.

- Extend the post-graduate membership by one year from three to four years. It's a tough job market out there for younger journalists. This would be a small way to help and retain younger SPJ members early in their

careers. Keep in place the existing deal - approved by the board - that allows students one free year, if they pay for two of these years.

Update: Staff must research financial impact of this move. Furthermore, it would require a bylaws change.

COMMUNICATIONS

- Redesign the look of SPJ's Leads. Use an email format that that looks more like Muck Rack Daily, a five-day a week memo which has a breezy user-friendly style. When possible, use photographs and other visual elements – such as Vine – to make these message more interesting.

Update: All agree that Leads design must improve. It's on staff's to-do list.

- Create a new email targeted specifically for student and post-graduate members. Enlist members of the Generation J committee to serve as contributors.

This can incorporate items from SPJ Leads, but would include at least one item per week that is geared toward younger members. The importance of this move was demonstrated in a survey of under-30 journalists. Nearly 62 percent of them listed email as their preferred method of getting information on SPJ.

Update: Committee members felt this should be the responsibility of the Gen J committee/community.

- Actively market SPJ to non-members who apply for the Mark of Excellence Awards. Send follow-up emails to these folks encouraging them to join SPJ and alerting them to future SPJ events.

Update: This is something staff currently does. But, in many cases entries are submitted by advisers, not the students themselves.

MENTORSHIPS, JOBS & NETWORKING

- Abandon the current model of the SPJ Job Bank, which clearly is not working. It currently features just five ads, two of which are not journalism-related. Many members are not even aware of the services.

Update: This requires further discussion by the board. To abandon the current job bank would be to abandon \$14,000 a year in revenue. Is it worth losing \$14k a year to have a robust job bank?

- Instead, actively solicit free job and internship postings from employers and make that list available to SPJ members only. Tap into and include links to job listings

maintained by local chapters such as the Headline Club and the Rio Grande and Long Island chapters. Feature one job at the end of each SPJ Leads email.

Update: SPJ used to do this, and it was very labor intensive to get and input job descriptions/notices. Perhaps we consider a partnership with JournalismJobs.com instead?

- Appoint a mentor-in-chief, a national volunteer who would write regular advice columns, do programs, tweet-ups, conference calls, podcasts and other regular forums to offer career advice to younger journalists.

Empower that person to recruit others, particularly from the Gen-J committee, to create an interactive webpage similar to The Daily Muse or Levo League.

Update: This seems like something that could be a function/benefit provided by the Gen J Committee/Community.

- Offer a limited number of short-term mentorships during the national convention. Use the model that IRE has used at its convention. They make these mentorships competitive and try to match people up with appropriate mentors.

Update: Joe is meeting with IRE Executive Director Mark Horvit in the spring, and will learn more about this.

- Do everything possible on the national level to encourage regional directors and local chapters to host networking events and sessions focusing on career development.

Update: This is something Tara can do via email reminders and Scripps Leadership training.

Some of the training requested by younger journalists included: entrepreneurial journalism, personal branding, digital story-telling, code, video editing, blogging, and social events that put student journalists into contact with professionals.

Update: Joe passed this information on to Scott Leadingham, director of education. Furthermore, these topic ideas should be passed along to chapter leaders by Tara.

PROGRAMS & CONFERENCES

- Offer more training. Stage a virtual SPJ conference over several weekends. Use the best of the spring regional programs. Offer it online for free to members and for a fee to non-members. Offer it on-demand after the conference.

Update: Like the idea, but will require some thought on how to make it happen.

- Offer convention programs that are less rudimentary and entry-level.

Update: This was a subjective comment by one member of the task-force.

- Team up with other organizations to underwrite training. For example, approach the Kaiser Foundation for a training session for health care reporting.

Update: This fits into the vision for SPJ. We will be looking to partner on all different levels, including training.

- Collaborate with other journalism organizations to build bigger, better programs, especially on topics that are not SPJ's specialty.

Update: See above

- Offer more webinars that are free to members but require a fee from non-members.

Update: Webinars are something we plan to do a lot more of. Joe is disappointed that we haven't done more to date.

WHO WE ARE

The SPJ Futures Task Force (formerly known as the name change task force) consists of the following members:

Sonny Albarado, Carl Corry, Paul Davis, John Ensslin, Sue Kopen Katcef, Michael Koretzky, Hagit Limor, Andy Schotz, David Sheets.

We also enlisted help from a group of younger SPJ members. They are:

Anthony Johan Cespedes, Lindsay Cook, Monica Guzman, Brett Hall, Taylor Mirfendereski, Victoria Reitano, Andrew Seaman, Meg Wagner, Lynn Walsh.

MINUTES
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS
APRIL 26, 2014
SKYLINE CLUB
INDIANAPOLIS
STREAMED LIVE AT WWW.SPJ.ORG
AND ON GOOGLE + AND YOUTUBE

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

With President David Cuillier presiding, the meeting of the board of directors of the Society of Professional Journalists was called to order at 9:10 a.m. on Saturday, April 26, 2014, at the Skyline Club in downtown Indianapolis.

In addition to Cuillier, the following were present: President-Elect Dana Neuts; Immediate Past President Sonny Albarado; Secretary-Treasurer Paul Fletcher; Vice President for Campus Chapter Affairs Sue Kopen Katcef; Director at-Large Bill McCloskey; Campus Advisers at-Large Kym Fox and Becky Tallent; Student Representative Lindsey Cook; Regional Directors Andy Schotz, Michael Koretzky, Patti Gallagher-Newberry, Susan Stevens, Joe Radske, Don Myers (virtually) and Tony Hernandez.

Staff members present for the meeting were Executive Director Joe Skeel, Associate Executive Director Chris Vachon, Director of Membership Linda Hall, Chapter Coordinator Tara Puckey and Awards Coordinator Chad Hosier.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

Cuillier's written report outlined the many efforts being done in the advocacy arena, such as coordinating the Society's efforts regarding the shield law; testifying before the Senate Judiciary Committee regarding the need to revamp FOIA; support to journalists in their fights for press rights and access to information; and speaking out about excessive controls by public information officers.

Cuillier thanked all of the SPJ committees for their hard work. Reports from most of the committees are included in the board packet.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Upon proper motion and second by McCloskey and Fox, respectively, the board approved meeting minutes from the August 24 and August 27 meetings with the following corrections:

August 24, 2014: correct AEJMC to ACEJMC under Old/New Business

August 27, 2014: correction to the spelling of Aeikens and Kirtley under Ratification section and correction to the spelling of McKerral and Petersen under the Committee section

STAFFING UPDATE

Cuillier and Executive Director Skeel outlined the plan for creating, and hiring, a new communications staff position.

The position will not replace the current post-graduate communications internship. Rather, this person will take on responsibilities that go above the intern's capabilities. With two communications staff members, this would allow SPJ to be more strategic and proactive with its efforts.

Upon proper motion and second by Albarado and Tallent, respectively, the board approved the creation of a new communications position.

BOARD STIPENDS

Paul Fletcher proposed that board stipends be adjusted based on a directive from the August 2013 board meeting. The changes are as follows:

	Current	Proposed
President	\$10,000	\$10,000
President-Elect	4,000	4,000
Secretary-Treasurer	3,000	4,000
Past President	2,500	2,500
VP, Campus Chapter Affairs	4,000	2,500
Campus Reps (2)	2,500	2,500
Directors on Executive Comm. (2)	2,000	2,500
Regional Directors	1,000	1,500
At Large Directors	1,000	1,500

The total amount budgeted per year under the current system is \$46,500. The total increases to \$51,500, or \$5,000 more.

Reasons for adjustments:

- The Secretary-Treasurer likely is traveling as much as the President-Elect, including attendance at regional conferences.
- The original stipend for VP, Campus Chapter Affairs anticipated the need for "parachute" visits to troubled campus chapters, a task not really handled by the VP any longer.
- The Campus Reps are traveling to two meetings – the spring meeting and convention.
- All Regional Directors would get an additional \$500 to cover increased travel costs.
- Stipend amounts for officers has not been changed since 2005 and the other stipends were raised in 2009.

Stipends are not intended to fully reimburse all the costs of a board member. They are intended as a baseline to help to defray the costs of required board service.

Upon proper motion and second by Hernandez and Fox, respectively, the board approved the new stipend amounts.

Upon proper motion and second by McCloskey and Schotz, respectively, the board approved consideration of unused stipend money for those who exceed their stipend amounts.

APPROVAL OF THE BUDGET

Executive Director Joe Skeel presented an overview of the budget and responded to questions.

Upon proper motion and second by Albarado and Kopen Katcef, respectively, the board approved the budget.

CHAPTER ACTIVITY

Puckey presented a list of chapters seeking to be chartered:

Ashford University (online program)

Franklin Pierce University

Lindenwood University

Seattle University

University of Central Missouri

University of Northwestern St Paul

Puckey presented the following chapter to be inactivated:

Regent University

Upon proper motion and second by Fox and Stevens, respectively, the board approved the charters for the six new chapters and the inactivation of one chapter.

NOMINATIONS REPORT

Nominations chairman Albarado gave a brief report on the potential slate of officers for the September board elections. There is no pending deadline to declare candidacy, but there is a June deadline to include candidate information in Quill.

SDX FOUNDATION PRESIDENT REPORT

Robert Leger indicated that the Foundation's financial status is healthy with \$12.3 million, which is a drop of 2.3 percent since December 2013.

Leger provided an update on the Pulliam Fellowship project from 2012 by Sandra Shea. The 2013 winner is unavailable for an update since he is currently working on his project.

Marion Street Press is still working on the history book. They hope to have it ready for convention.

PROPOSED BYLAWS CHANGES

Currently, Article 9, Section 8 states:

All members of the Society in good standing at the date and time balloting begins are eligible to vote for officers and at-large directors.

Staff requests the following change:

All members of the Society in good standing ~~at the date and time~~ seven days prior to the date balloting begins are eligible to vote for officers and at-large directors.

Leaving the bylaws as is creates unnecessary work while at convention – when time is precious, and leaves SPJ vulnerable to technology failures.

The safest solution is to amend the bylaws as proposed.

The bylaws committee prefers not to change the bylaws, but instead requests an administrative change.

Upon proper motion and second by Albarado and Fletcher, respectively, the board approved the bylaws change being sent to the delegates for a vote.

Should the delegates pass the measure, it is suggested that wording be added to the website letting those joining know that they can't vote within the seven days prior to the date balloting begins.

FREELANCE COMMUNITY

Freelance Community Chair Michael Fitzgerald submitted an application to form the first SPJ Community.

Questions were asked, such as who will oversee the communities? Are communities eligible for programming grants? Will there be board representation for communities? None of these questions were answered yet, but as communities develop, these, and other questions, will be brought to the board and addressed.

Upon proper motion and second by Neuts and Stevens, respectively, the board approved the creation of the Freelance Community.

LEGAL DEFENSE FUND REQUEST

A second request for \$5,000 has been received from Otterbein University. Otterbein360.com is suing for campus police records. The students filed the suit and the court has referred the case to mediation. The parties have met with no immediate resolution.

Upon proper motion and second by McCloskey and Koretzky, respectively, the board approved another \$5,000 Legal Defense Fund grant to Otterbein University.

SPJ NAME CHANGE UPDATE

Cuillier reported on the work of the task force regarding the name change. The group determined that there was not enough support from the membership for a name change. They did, however, determine that the Society needs to do more to recruit, retain and engage early-career journalists. As a result, they want to work on this issue instead. The board felt it was important to make a statement regarding this topic and decided upon the following:

Upon proper motion and second by Neuts and Stevens, respectively, the board approved the following statement:

Whereas, the name change task force concluded there is little support for the name change, this board recommends to the delegates that the name remains the Society of Professional Journalists.

When this statement is publicized, include a copy of the task force report.

ETHICS CODE REVISION UPDATE

The board discussed the work being done by the ethics code revision committee thus far. They wondered if it, as a board, should act as an editor for the code revisions. Board members asked about the processes and procedures used during the last code revision in 1996. Those in the room, who were involved in 1996, shared information regarding that revision.

Upon proper motion and second by Newberry-Gallagher and Kopen Katcef, respectively, the board approved a request for an update from ethics committee chair Kevin Smith, in two weeks, and request to see the latest version of the ethics code revision to formulate a recommendation.

SPJ'S FUTURE

Skeel explained how the memo outlining his thoughts about the future of SPJ came about. He said it is a compilation of discussions with SPJ leaders, SPJ staff and journalism association executive directors. The vision has been in the works for the last two years, in some form or fashion, but bringing to the board is really just the beginning. Skeel is looking for, at this meeting, feedback from board members. No motion, no action is needed. Just plain old discussion and dialogue would be the best course of action for the board at this time. Skeel shared that the feelings from executive directors, about partnerships, mainly centered on the fact that they don't want to lose their autonomy or identity.

Overall the board supported the vision presented and they shared a variety of thoughts and suggestions, such as:

Do media employers fall into this plan?

The new staff position (communications strategist) could help with this

The vision plan should be branded

A marketing plan should be created for the vision plan

Something should be sent out to members, but not as vague as the initial memo

Does the vision plan duplicate any efforts with the young journalists' task force?

We should catalog the 60+ journalism association and indicate they do and don't do well

What is the one thing we want or think can happen first within this plan?

Keep the vision plan as a standing item on all executive committee and board agendas

Upon proper motion and second by Albarado and Neuts, respectively, the board voted to endorse the executive director's vision of SPJ with further details to come.

See Appendix A – memo attached

STREAMLINING OF SPJ AND SDX FOUNDATION ACTIVITIES/RESPONSIBILITIES

Skeel outlined an idea he presented to presidents Cullier and Robert Leger (SDX Foundation president). The idea involves having SPJ's focus (time, energy and money) be on lobbying, advocacy, awards and membership. In turn, the Foundation takes over responsibility for educational programming.

The board discussed the concepts in the memo and asked questions.

See Appendix B – memo attached

Upon proper motion and second by Koretzky and Hernandez, respectively, the board voted to support the idea of streamlining activities and responsibilities with the SDX Foundation.

ADVOCACY FUND

Cuillier outlined plans for a sustained fund that fights for FOI. Other organizations are limited in the ability to do this due to their 501(c)(3) status. SPJ is uniquely positioned to be in the forefront of such important efforts.

The board discussed the concepts in the memo and asked questions.

Upon proper motion and second by Fox and Stevens, respectively, the board voted to support the concept of some type of advocacy fund.

See Appendix C – memo attached

REGIONAL MEETINGS AT EIJ14

Regional meetings at EIJ may no longer be able to take place concurrently due to space constraints. A suggestion was made to no longer hold these meetings. Another suggestion was made to have a room available for the meetings and the meeting times are staggered throughout the days. Each regional director can determine if he/she would like to host a meeting. If the regional director requests a meeting, then a date and time would be assigned and publicized to the attendees.

Koretzky volunteered to poll the regional directors to determine who wants to conduct a meeting at EIJ. He is to report his findings to staff.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Time was set aside for public comment because the meeting was live streamed, but there were none to be shared. Only a few people watched the live streaming.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon proper motion and second by Hernandez and Neuts, respectively, the meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m.



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APPENDIX A

DATE: March 24, 2014
FROM: Joe Skeel, Executive Director
SUBJ: Vision for SPJ
FOR: SPJ Board of Directors

I was asked by the Executive Committee in August to examine the role of SPJ and its place in journalism. Truth be told, I've been doing this since I was hired as Quill editor in December 2004.

But it wasn't until I was named Executive Director in 2009 that my vision of SPJ began to clear a bit. This, of course, is a result of having the opportunity to evaluate, think big picture, study trends, listen to association experts and meet regularly with other journalism organization leaders.

This has brought me to a few overriding – if unpleasant – realizations:

1. Over the past 15-20 years, SPJ leadership has focused too much on internal matters and not enough on external issues. (Membership vs. journalism).
2. There isn't a single group in the United States that is effectively serving the watchdog/advocacy role on behalf of the profession.
3. SPJ will likely not survive as a membership association – as we define membership today.

I realize this may be hard to read. But I should also point out that I don't see SPJ dying any time soon. We could remain on course for the next few decades. But 50 years from now, if it remains on its current path, I do believe SPJ will be non-existent (or most certainly less relevant).

I also realize that I am one person, with one opinion. There is no guarantee that my beliefs would play out if things remain unchanged. That's why everything I present below contains a critical element: flexibility.

By implementing changes to alter our current path, I believe SPJ can remain vital and relevant long into the future. And if my thoughts are off base a bit, these gradual changes still give SPJ the ability to adapt along the way. The key here is to evolve slowly, as outside forces exert pressure and change the circumstances. It's not healthy to change course suddenly based on the opinions of a select few. When posed with the question "what is SPJ's role in journalism," my answer is simple: To be a leader in the industry on all fronts – advocacy, training, membership, etc. But the more I pondered, the more I realized the question wasn't broad enough.

SPJ doesn't want to just improve journalism. Our mission is based on the belief that SPJ will strive to improve and protect democracy. We do that *through* journalism.

So, the real question is:

How can SPJ most positively impact and protect democracy through journalism?

Incidentally, the answer lies mostly within SPJ's mission statement. We simply need to think differently about how to accomplish these goals.

Our mission:

The Society of Professional Journalists is dedicated to the perpetuation of a free press as the cornerstone of our nation and our liberty.

To ensure that the concept of self-government outlined by the U.S. Constitution remains a reality into future centuries, the American people must be well informed in order to make decisions regarding their lives, and their local and national communities.

It is the role of journalists to provide this information in an accurate, comprehensive, timely and understandable manner.

It is the mission of the Society of Professional Journalists:

- To promote this flow of information.*
- To maintain constant vigilance in protection of the First Amendment guarantees of freedom of speech and of the press.*
- To stimulate high standards and ethical behavior in the practice of journalism.*
- To foster excellence among journalists.*
- To inspire successive generations of talented individuals to become dedicated journalists.*
- To encourage diversity in journalism.*
- To be the pre-eminent, broad-based membership organization for journalists.*
- To encourage a climate in which journalism can be practiced freely.*

Since 1909, we have felt the best way to achieve these goals is through individual members. The more journalists that are exposed to our mission, the greater likelihood we would be successful in improving and protecting journalism. They would be better journalists, carry the torch in their newsrooms and communities, and democracy would be better because of our grass-roots efforts.

For the first 75 years of SPJ, this was a decent approach. It works fairly well when the majority of journalists are in your ranks. It still works well if you have 15,000-20,000 members. And, frankly, we didn't have the ability to reach the masses like we do today. Grass-roots was the only option for much of SPJ's life.

Today, however, there are fewer journalists in general. Furthermore, there are about 65 journalism associations in the United States. All are dedicated to a niche, whether it's a beat, medium, ethnic group, etc., etc. They can provide specific resources and training better than SPJ. In many instances, they provide more value to these individuals than SPJ ever could. More associations are sure to pop up as the profession and technology evolves.

Because SPJ is the most broad-based, we can't realistically compete with these groups within their areas of expertise.

The fight for members has led to the journalism association landscape becoming introverted. We are all so concerned with doing everything we can to appeal to members, few take enough time to look outside its own walls. Nobody has an eye on the bigger picture. (*Realization #2*). Ironically, our own mission statement dictates that **we** do this.

Lastly, fewer people in general are joining a professional association of any kind. Because of the internet, there are plenty of resources available. And younger generations don't necessarily feel the need to meet "face-to-face" in order to network and find jobs. They will do so if it's an option. They still see value in it, but don't necessarily see it as more important than getting necessary skills, etc. If forced to choose, they will forgo the networking as we know it.

It is this cultural shift, and the vast options for membership associations, that leads me to the conclusion that SPJ membership will continue to decline – or at the very least remain stagnant. It will never return to the level necessary to meet our goals via grass-roots efforts.

As of today, SPJ still has the market cornered on the chapter structure. It's the only local option for many journalists. And we have name recognition. However, other associations are beginning to launch their own chapters – with enthusiastic leadership. Some of our own chapters have seen so much value in what others can offer, they are deciding to become "joint" chapters. Georgia and DePaul are billed as SPJ/ONA chapters. NAHJ has chapters popping up. Not long from now, we won't be the only game in town. And over time, as the numbers dwindle, it will be even harder to find good chapter leaders. Our chapters will likely get worse. Our name won't carry the same weight. Over time, it stands to reason, SPJ will become less important. (*Realization #3*).

What is SPJ without a strong membership base? How would we achieve our mission? Wouldn't we lose our collective voice if we had no members? How could we afford to do anything without a hefty membership base supporting us financially?

It is these questions that led SPJ down a path of chasing its own membership tail. It's a common situation that many associations find themselves in – usually induced by survival instincts. As numbers drop, the first instinct is to do whatever necessary to fix the problem. Groups begin to look inward, focusing their attention and resources on their own processes, procedures, programs, marketing, services, special deals, gimmicks, etc., – all aimed at turning the membership tide. These groups often lose sight of what made them appealing in the first place – their mission.

Caught up in survival, these groups rarely stop to ask: Is this change out of our control? Better yet, would we be better off focusing our attention elsewhere and re-inventing who we are to achieve our mission? Is there another way?

In just the past two years, SPJ has spent considerable time and money on the following topics – all aimed at membership. This list, of course, isn't inclusive of all that we have done, and it doesn't include all committee work or the day-to-day management of membership. But it will give you a good idea of the major stuff:

- Hiring Tara, a full-time chapter coordinator (and the time spent managing chapters).
- Revamping the Scripps Leadership Program.
- Assessing the state of chapters – and deactivating several.
- Revamping the annual report (several times).
- Discussing and eliminating the star ranking system.
- Hiring a part-time caller to contact new and renewing members.
- Upgrading the online join/renew process.
- Auto-dues membership billing.
- Creating newsroom memberships.
- Creating an international chapter plan.
- One member-one vote (and bylaws changes).
- SPJ name change.
- SPJ Solutions.
- Developing communities.
- Chapter leaders training sessions at EIJ.

Think of your last few board meetings, and come up with things that weren't related to membership, chapters or governance. What stands out? Could you think of anything? How many things can you think of that were related to improving and protecting journalism directly – not through a membership/governance function? (*Realization #1*).

This memo is not meant to criticize in any way, shape or form. It's a natural behavior. Furthermore, the board of directors has to manage the Society's governance/operational structure. That's partly why it exists. But, it shouldn't be its only focus.

Our actions (and lack of results) have provided insight into the question: Is this membership decline out of our control? In most respects, I think it is. We can tweak, adjust and alter things here and there. We have been doing this for at least the past five years – likely much longer. But, I don't believe any of these adjustments can lead to a return to the way things used to be. Our best efforts will allow us to stay alive longer, but the climate has changed too dramatically.

We have two choices: Ride it out until the end, or evolve.

I prefer to evolve. Not for the sole purpose of keeping SPJ alive. But because the public needs a group to step up and be a leader in journalism.

With that said, no evolution can happen quickly. We can't ignore our current model, lest our resources will evaporate. Any transition must be a slow one. Therefore, we must continue to invest in membership recruitment and retention efforts. But I think we need to view this as an evolving focus, not our only solution to success and survival. Membership is not an end-game. Improving and protecting democracy is the goal.

Therefore, I believe it's time for SPJ to look beyond membership and chart a course that will still allow us to have maximum impact on the perpetuation of a free press as the cornerstone of our nation and our liberty.

The good news is, we've already laid some groundwork.

SEMANTICS OF MEMBERSHIP

In SPJ's world, an individual who has paid her dues is a member. We also have a handful of institutions that are given membership status. A couple years ago we developed newsroom memberships.

Today, therefore, we have individuals and entities as "members."

What if we went a bit further and we applied the institutional concept to simply include a collective group of people – not defined by their school or place of employment.

What if another journalism association found value in the services that SPJ provides? And those services allow it to direct more energy and resources toward fulfilling its mission – making journalism better. This is no different than a newsroom. Couldn't it be considered a "member" of SPJ if it paid a fee and we provided benefits – similar to an entity or institution?

Let's step back now and look at this scenario: *SPJ membership would consist of individuals, institutions and other journalism associations. All pay some fee. All receive some benefits.*

Now, remove the word "membership" from the statement above.

SPJ would consist of individuals, institutions and other journalism associations. All pay some fee. All receive some benefits.

As you have probably realized, this is already taking place. We have individuals, institutions and other journalism organizations that pay for services. We call the latter "association management" as opposed to "membership."

The difference between these two ideas is the giant hurdle that SPJ leadership must clear. Specifically, leadership must understand that *members* as they are defined today can't be the lifeblood of SPJ.

As a collective group, SPJ still believes the best way to reach its mission is through individuals. It's because this is what we know. And we try to organize those individuals through a chapter structure. We do everything we can to improve our offerings and make our

chapters more effective – leading to more individuals. When it doesn't work, or success is marginal, we try new things. Yet, those new things are still based on the notion that we need more individuals in SPJ's ranks.

It's time for SPJ to move beyond the concept of individuals. For as long as the sun burns, SPJ could continue to fight for individual memberships. We can continue to work on our chapter structure. But as I shared above, I believe no matter how hard we try, it's an unwinnable battle. At our core, we can offer very little that is unique in regards to member benefits. There are fewer people in our business, and other groups have caught up to us in many respects. Finding good, enthusiastic leaders to run chapters gets harder by the day.

This, of course, leads to several questions – which I have pondered for the past four years: If SPJ isn't defined by our members, who are we? What's the point of SPJ and what is our focus? How do we still reach our mission? How do we have a collective voice? And, of course, are we really willing to deconstruct the thing that many find valuable: networking and a sense of community?

In reality, I believe we must remain a “quasi-membership” organization. But it's time we view our structure a bit differently and stop focusing so much of our resources on individuals (and chapters).

THE CONAGRA MODEL

You may recognize the name, but you may not know from where. Its motto: “ConAgra Foods: Making the food you love.”

ConAgra is a conglomerate made up of several different food producers. Here is a brief history: It all started in 1890, when Gilbert C. Van Camp began manufacturing canned pork and beans. A few years later, Central State Flouring Mill is formed. Then along came Hunt Brothers fruit packing company in 1890. In 1919 Nebraska Consolidated Mills was formed, and was made up of a few small operations. In 1920 it launched Peter Pan peanut butter and LaChoy. Also in this year, the Knotts opened their first farm.

Over the years, more independent food producers came onto the scene as Americans desired more pre-packaged food to meet the changes with society. The world was changing. So, Nebraska Consolidated Mills expanded. Chef Boyardee, Parkay, Rold Gold, Marie Callender, Banquet and other notable brands all hit the market – but not under the Nebraska Mills umbrella. They were independently managed, just like the Van Camp company. But over time, these companies were bought up by Nebraska Mills.

By 1969, Nebraska Mills had expanded across the U.S. In 1971, it changed its name to ConAgra and continues to acquire food lines, such as the ones that I mentioned above. It's not uncommon that when a new food line is launched, the inventor approaches ConAgra in hopes they will see value in it. ConAgra provides shelter.

Today, ConAgra is made up of about 45 different food lines. It has evolved by launching its own brands (as it identifies opportunities and gaps in the market) and merging with other

brands. However, you can't walk into a store and buy anything with a big "ConAgra" brand label.

Why?

Because as ConAgra has evolved since 1919, and new products hit the market, it realized the benefit in letting each of those established brands live on. The brand recognition already existed. Individuals found great value and comfort in specific brands. ConAgra believes that it can "produce the foods you love" by doing what it can to help those individual brands succeed.

ConAgra, therefore, helps with research and development. They streamline administrative functions. They speak on Capitol Hill and have their fingers (and money) in the pockets of lawmakers. ConAgra is the company that keeps an eye on the food industry's best interests while allowing the individual brands to focus on what they do best: producing food that people like.

Of course, ConAgra is a multi-million dollar company hell-bent on profits. Their goal is to beat their competitors and corner the market. That should not be SPJ's goal. Journalism (and democracy) is better off if all journalism associations succeed in their own niches.

With that said, I believe that by following the ConAgra concept, SPJ can not only remain relevant and vital to individual journalists, it can have a far greater impact on our profession (and democracy) as a whole. SPJ wouldn't be evolving just to survive. It would become stronger, with one mission in mind. The same mission we have held since 1909 (a decade before ConAgra was born):

"The perpetuation of a free press as the cornerstone of our nation and our liberty."

By providing low-cost management services to other journalism associations, or developing other smart partnerships with these groups, SPJ can help those individual groups become more successful. Saving money on their management leaves more for their individual members and missions. And if all 65 journalism associations were better because of this, it stands to reason that journalism in the United States would be better.

SPJ and its partner associations would also be better equipped to educate journalists on all topics because we could more easily cross pollinate our expertise. No group, such as SPJ, would feel the need to be everything to everyone – duplicating efforts of other organizations in an effort to get/keep members. ONA teaching digital media; Education writers teaching education reporters; SPJ experts teaching ethics and freelancing; NAHJ teaching about immigration and diversity issues; NAJA teaching about coverage of Indian Country; RTDNA teaching about broadcasting. The list goes on and on.

Under this model, I believe that SPJ and its partners could turn the tide of waning media credibility. We would have a greater ability to educate the general public because we would have a unified voice to reach the masses. And by streamlining expenses, we would have more

money to reach this goal. Furthermore, as a group representing all journalists, SPJ could more easily call out the unethical journalism that gives the rest of us a bad name. Other groups also wouldn't feel the pressure of having to do so, putting them in awkward positions. I envision a day when news organizations actually care what SPJ and its partners organizations say, and think before they act, lest they face the wrath of the unified profession speaking out against their actions.

Perhaps most important, I believe this model will allow SPJ and its partners to have a loud voice on First Amendment issues. Instead of 65 journalism groups creating noise independently, having no large-scale impact, one group representing all organizations would speak – with 15,000-20,000 journalists behind it. SPJ and its partners would be a unified voice impossible to ignore.

But, what happens to SPJ's members? Perhaps they join other associations. Years from now, perhaps SPJ's value is as a starting point for journalists, until they define their niche – a niche we would put them in touch with. Perhaps they simply stay an individual member of SPJ because they support the cause of advocacy. Perhaps they are members of more than one association (made easy by a unified membership price) because they like the niche training, networking and support the cause. That's OK, too. I'm not advocating that SPJ force anyone away. I'm simply saying that individuals are *a part* of SPJ's organizational structure. Not the whole.

Of course, the big question is this: Would other journalism associations have an interest? Early indications are “yes,” although it won't happen overnight. Many will be skeptical that this is a takeover plot. It may take several years to eliminate that fear and develop a comprehensive partnership where we are all rowing in the same direction. But, you can see bits and pieces of this today.

NAHJ hired us two years ago to manage their bookkeeping and membership. That evolved into a conference partnership. RTDNA joined with us for EIJ in 2011. Beginning last year, we provide bookkeeping services to them. Most recently, I have spoken with two other journalism associations that have an interest in our services. Executive Directors of 8-10 journalism associations meet once a year. We talk about ways to partner. All of us are eager to do it. Oftentimes, it is organizational culture that holds us back.

Regardless, conversations about partnerships are happening now. And NAHJ and RTDNA are proof that this evolution can happen.

HOW DO WE EVOLVE?

I was asked in my review to create a memo that outlined where SPJ should be in 5, 20 and 50 years from now. Everything I have written, culminating in SPJ becoming a management/umbrella organization for other journalism associations, is where I believe SPJ could be in 20-30 years.

Clearly, we can't just flip a switch and make it happen. Getting there will require small changes over time, some of which we have already started. But we must continue to move forward. Conversations with other organizations must continue.

In the next five years...

- SPJ must remain committed to recruiting and retaining members and providing needed support to chapters. Individuals are still the key to our current business model.
- SPJ leadership must get comfortable with the notion that individual memberships and chapters (as we define them today) are not the way SPJ can have the greatest impact on journalism and democracy. Furthermore, it may not even be a path to survival. Leadership's historical view on individual membership must evolve.
- SPJ must continue to create worthwhile partnerships with other journalism associations in order to show its commitment to ensuring all groups thrive. *We have to make it clear that SPJ is not "taking over."* *Doing so would only weaken journalism as a whole, not strengthen it.* These can be conference partnerships, association management partnerships, educational programming partnerships, membership agreements, etc. Without these partnerships, I believe the quality of journalism (and therefore the public's trust) will continue to decline. We must all row in the same direction.
- As these partnerships develop, SPJ could develop a handful of chapters or communities that are made up of members from SPJ and its partners. Ideally, I'd love to see a metro chapter that is THE journalism chapter/group in the area – regardless of individual membership affiliation. I can't see SPJ chapters surviving as we know them now. But I could see a day where chapters/communities actually thrive if membership is made up of journalists from all organizations – or aren't members of any organization.
- SPJ should continue to identify gaps in the journalism world and create communities to address those needs: such as a freelancing community or a young journalists' community.
- SPJ should strive to hire a person/firm dedicated to advocacy/lobbying by the time 2019 rolls around. Beefing up efforts in this area is critical to appealing to a larger audience and cementing SPJ as a legitimate voice that can act on behalf of other journalism associations.
- SPJ Leadership should begin to understand and accept that the current leadership model (based on geography) will likely change over time.
- SPJ will be evaluating if it is on the best path to best improve and protect journalism.

In 20 years, in addition to what I shared above...

- SPJ's network will contain a significant number of journalism associations, including those from overseas.

- SPJ will have individual members that are undecided about their niche or simply support our mission to improve and protect journalism. But many (if not most) will have chosen to join one of our partners.
- SPJ's main priorities will be: management for other journalism associations (membership, accounting, event planning, awards management, etc.) and advocacy/lobbying (public and governments).
- SPJ and the SDX Foundation will work to fill training gaps not covered by other journalism associations, and provide training resources as needed to members of our partner organizations.
- SPJ's board of directors may be made up of leaders from other journalism associations.
- Through efforts with our partners, the public will begin to understand the difference between credible journalism and the "media."
- SPJ and its partners will be a critical voice on journalism matters. We will call out unethical journalism. We will shine the light on government shenanigans. We will push for journalism to be better, because the public deserves it.
- SPJ will be evaluating if it is on the best path to best improve and protect journalism.

In 50 years...

- Most importantly, the public will have regained its faith in journalism, and journalists will be better about keeping elected officials on the straight and narrow -- truly serving its role as the Fourth Estate.
- SPJ will be entrenched as THE collective voice on matters related to journalism and its role in democracy.
- It will be THE group that the general public, governments and news organizations go to when it comes to issues of the press and media credibility.
- It will be THE group that journalists must join, made easy with the array of options created by our thriving partners.
- SPJ's partners will be thriving without the burden of management holding them back.
- SPJ and its partners will continue to welcome new journalism organizations/communities as the media landscape continually evolves.
- SPJ and its partners will ensure that journalism education meets the demands of the day.
- SPJ will be evaluating if it is on the best path to best improve and protect journalism.

Nobody can predict the future. I certainly don't claim to have a crystal ball. What I have outlined are my thoughts and ideas based on my observations and research.

It's quite possible that in 20 years, SPJ realizes there is a better course for its future and what I have laid out is worthless. Flexibility will always be critical. For example, some of the partnerships we develop today may not lead to anything greater. We may never all come

together. Regardless, they are beneficial today. And that makes them worth pursuing, even if you don't agree with the larger vision.

But, it's a fact that SPJ's current path hasn't led to improvements in membership. Media credibility has only gotten worse over the past two decades. Governments are more secret than ever and journalists themselves are looking for someone to help them make sense of it all. No individual journalism organization can fix these problems by itself.

Doing it will require teamwork, which will require sacrifices and risk. It will bring about frustration and frightening changes. There will be disagreements and unpleasant conversations among leaders and partner organizations. Turning the tide and restoring the important role of journalism in democracy will take all of us working together.

But, most importantly, it will require a leading organization to bring everyone together and start the process.

I believe SPJ is best suited to take on this role. And I believe the time is right to start this evolution.



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MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 26, 2014
FROM: Joe Skeel, Executive Director
SUBJ: SPJ/SDX: Divide and Conquer
FOR: SPJ Board of Directors

Last March, Robert Leger, Dave Cuillier and I got together in Robert’s backyard to talk about the big picture of SPJ. Much of what we talked about is included in my memo titled “Vision for SPJ.”

Part of that conversation, however, was an idea to better streamline and utilize the capabilities of SPJ and the SDX Foundation. Currently, we operate as two separate entities – both in practice and philosophy.

This is likely because the Foundation was established to simply support SPJ’s efforts. But despite the enormous growth of the Foundation since its inception in 1967, its role hasn’t changed much.

I think it’s time we rethink the way we have always done things.

I propose we stop thinking like two different groups and begin to think like a single, determined journalism machine.

In my opinion, we are best served if we let SPJ focus its time and energy (and money) on lobbying, advocacy, awards and membership. The Foundation can focus on educational programming.

As it currently stands, SPJ manages all of this. It requests grants from the SDX Foundation in order to conduct training. Staff determines the programming (after consultation with volunteers and other folks outside of HQ walls), creates the budgets, writes grant requests and submits the grants. SDX then vets the grants and lets SPJ know if it will fund it.

Assuming it does, SPJ then receives a check, with restrictions on how it will be spent. We conduct the programs, then complete a grant recap report for the SDX Foundation at year-end. If any money is left over, we send it back to the SDX Foundation.

Under the new scenario, staff would determine the programming (after consultation with volunteers and other folks outside of HQ walls) and put the costs into the overall annual SDX budget. Staff then executes those programs, branded as SPJ, just as it does now. That’s it.

There are a number of advantages to the proposal, as I see it:

- It allows each organization to focus on its capabilities, creating a clear direction for each group. We would be dividing and conquering.
- It's more efficient for both groups, eliminating several hours of staff and volunteer time currently related to the grants process.
- It positions the SDX Foundation to be more entrepreneurial. It can identify the holes in journalism training and move quickly to fill them instead of waiting for someone (including SPJ) to ask for a grant during the next cycle.
- With a clear focus, the SDX Foundation can work to become a force within the journalism funding world. This has the potential to lead to more partnerships with other journalism funders. That leads to training more journalists.
- It allows us to better leverage other sources of funding when we get them. For example, in the past year or two, Gannett Foundation and Kiplinger provided funding for some SPJ core programs – programming we already had approved grants for. Staff was bound to use the SDX grant funding or return it unless we had the resources to pull off extra programs. It's a good problem to have, but a problem nonetheless. If SDX “owns” educational programming, it can more easily shift that funding to a different program altogether or recycle it into the next year. It can find someone doing great training and help support them. It doesn't have to live within the current confines of the “annual grant cycle.” We could even use it to match funding from other foundations, allowing the money to stretch farther and train more people.
- Just as important as the training, SPJ could direct more resources (including money) toward advocacy and lobbying, This is the entire reason SPJ is a 501c6.

There are potential disadvantages:

- To make this pencil out for SPJ, the Foundation would need to also take ownership of Quill magazine, which has evolved into an educational tool. The decisions on what it may become in the future would be in the Foundation's hands.
- SPJ could lose some control over educational programming. If the process remains the same, where staff guides that ship with valuable input, then nothing changes in the practical sense. But SPJ would no longer have the final say.
- As SDX becomes more entrepreneurial, it may be less interested in making grants to outside groups such as Reporters Committee, SPLC and so on.
- Long term, the SDX Foundation may become less of a supporting foundation for SPJ. Are we OK with that?

I'm sure you will think of other pros and cons. You will likely have some specific questions that I haven't thought of. That's the point of this discussion.

The SDX Foundation board will be having this same conversation during its meeting. President Robert Leger has already begun the discussion within the Foundation board.

The SPJ Executive Committee discussed this in January, and is supportive of talking more about it. Why? Because making this shift frees more SPJ resources to devote to advocacy, something we don't do enough of now.

Next question that you may be asking: What are the financial implications?

I produced three potential budgets for Leger and Cuillier:

1. Status quo. SPJ, after hiring a communications coordinator, has a projected surplus of about \$10,000. SDX, after funding SPJ requests, would have \$75,000 to grant to outside groups. Last year, the Foundation filled outside grants for \$15,000.
2. SDX takes ownership of all educational programming *except* Quill, makes no grants to SPJ except for EIJ. In this scenario, SPJ finishes \$55,000 in the red. SDX has a surplus of \$156,000. It's a non-starter.
3. SDX takes ownership of *all* educational programming, makes no grants to SPJ except \$82,000 for EIJ. In this scenario, the SPJ surplus rises to **\$65,000**. The SDX surplus shrinks to \$24,000 available for outside groups. We can adjust these numbers by reducing support for EIJ, which shrinks the SPJ surplus and increases the SDX amount dollar-for-dollar.

This is based on 2014-15 forecasts numbers prior to any finance committee meetings. When the market drops, the SDX Foundation would have to make cuts, including outside grants. But it does that now.

The bottom line of the third scenario: SDX operates more like its own business, generating revenue through extra support from the likes of Kiplinger and the Gannett Foundation, and less like a parent with a checkbook. SPJ uses that bottom-line boost for lobbying and advocacy initiatives. SPJ fights, SDX trains.

In terms of the process for making any of these proposed changes, I expect we're looking at a longer conversation, with no action before Nashville. It will probably require a transition over a year's time or so if we go in this direction. But, it's important to begin this discussion today.



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APPENDIX C

DATE: April 9, 2014
FROM: David Cuillier, SPJ President
SUBJ: LDF Forever
FOR: SPJ Board of Directors

Press freedom isn't free. And it isn't forever.

We can change that.

This memo proposes the creation of an endowed war chest that will guarantee that we will always have the means to fight for press freedom, no matter the economy, the budget, or the whims of donors. You might have seen my column in the January/February issue of Quill about an advocacy fund. What I'm talking about is an endowed Legal Defense Fund. Call it the Forever Fund for short.

THE NEED

Clearly, it isn't getting any easier to fight for press rights today. It's getting worse. Plaintiffs and government officials are more savvy at threatening journalists with libel suits, SLAPP suits, and subpoenas. Government PIOs are more adept at managing the message, and officials are increasingly gaming freedom of information laws to increase secrecy at all levels of government. Reporters Without Borders now ranks the United States in press freedom at 46th in the world, behind such countries as Romania, El Salvador and Botswana. Meanwhile, there are fewer and fewer sustainable resources to litigate and advocate for press freedom. News organizations are less inclined to sue for public records and open meetings. Litigation funds are few – the National Freedom of Information Coalition's \$1 million litigation fund is finite and focuses solely on certain litigation costs. The SPJ Legal Defense Fund helps some, but typical annual payouts of \$10,000 have limited impact, and the fund relies on the charity of SPJ members bidding at the annual auction. We, as journalists and citizens, need a sustained war chest to push back and guarantee someone is always fighting for the First Amendment.

HISTORY OF STRUGGLE

Bert Bostrom, in his book *Talent, Truth and Energy*, documenting the history of SPJ, wrote, "Money to finance what its leaders and members hoped to accomplish in fighting for First Amendment rights had always been the Society's major stumbling block." (p. 105) In the early years the organization simply budgeted funds toward helping journalists in need. On Nov. 15, 1972, the board formally established the Sigma Delta Chi Legal Fund with \$1,600, raising donations to get it to \$6,000 by the following year. Most grants were set at \$200 (\$900 in 2014 dollars), and the fund was nearly depleted within five years. The account balance rose and fell, depending on the energy of volunteers, hot-button press case of the time, and spending priorities. For example, in addition to litigation, the fund has

been used, especially early on, to assist a FOI service center, Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, and media attorneys.

LDF TODAY

The \$150,000 Legal Defense Fund is managed by SPJ (not SDX), meaning contributions are not tax deductible and that the money can be used for any litigation, lobbying or advocacy. According to the SPJ website, the fund's primary role is to "initiate and support litigation that enforces public access to government records and proceedings." But it can also support FOI hotlines, coalitions, newsletters, as well as legislative lobbying aimed at enforcing access to records and proceedings. In the past, the fund also has been used for defending journalists from subpoenas and libel suits. The fund is not mentioned in the bylaws and has no legal restrictions on spending other than fulfilling the intentions of the donors who give toward the fund, particularly at the annual auction. People can request up to \$5,000 from the LDF Committee, and go to the full board for further funding. Typically, annual total payouts have not exceeded \$10,000, although that is likely to change since the committee-level authorized payout amount was increased from \$2,000 to \$5,000 last year. It is quite possible the increased amount could lead to eventual depletion of the fund, just as the society has experienced in the past. Money to fight today; gone tomorrow. A sustained fight requires an endowment.

THE POSSIBILITIES

In addition to helping journalists sue for public records or defend against subpoenas, we can do so much more to fight, advocate and litigate for journalism. Such a fund could pay for:

- Trips for the president or other members to Washington, D.C., to lobby Congress on FOIA, the shield law, FERPA, or any number of federal issues.
- Grants for other journalism organizations. For example, the National Press Photographers Association is much better positioned than SPJ to fight for photographer's rights, and this fund could help them battle more effectively.
- Proactive litigation to establish better case law, and advocacy for better state freedom of information laws.
- Travel expenses to give out Black Hole awards and initiate other parachute offenses.
- Public education, such as PSAs, advertising, school curriculum development, and outreach. If the public doesn't support journalism, then the politicians certainly won't. Create another campaign, like the brilliant "If we didn't tell you, who would?" initiative.

THE METHOD

Creating an endowed fund is not easy, and it takes time. This is something that could take decades to develop, but if we start now we might just see the benefits in our lifetime, and the effects will reverberate long after we are dead. We have the chance to protect journalism forever. Here are some ways of getting this started and infusing the fund as we maintain our current activities:

- **Initial Seed Match:** To launch the endowment, provide a 1-to-1 matching seed of \$100,000, shifting \$100,000 from the existing LDF account, leaving \$50,000 available for annual typical LDF requests. Leverage that \$100,000 with donations to

get the endowment to \$200,000. This base level would generate enough interest income (\$10,000) to exceed the annual LDF auction revenues and get started. The goal would be to get the endowment to \$1 million within 10 years, then keep building from there.

- **Fundraisers.** Continue the auction and other ways of raising money. Some of this fundraising would maintain the \$50,000 in the expendable account, but extra could be put in the endowment. For example, I am considering raffling off the president's suite at EIJ14 in Nashville, or putting it up for online auction, with funds going toward the endowment.
- **Lifetime Freedom Memberships:** Give the lifetime membership purpose by raising it from \$1,000 to \$2,000 and make it payable through auto billing for four years (\$41.67 a month). Create the expectation that lifetime members also pledge substantial donations in their wills.
- **Budget Policy:** Establish a budgeting policy that any excess funds in the SPJ budget at year's end go into the endowment.
- **Legacy Gifts:** Some people may want to give to SDX toward journalism education and others might want to give toward this for press freedom fights. The great thing about a legacy gift is when you die you don't need the tax deduction, so people might be more willing to give to the LDF fund in their will rather than when they are alive. I am willing to pledge \$25,000 toward the endowment, raising that to a minimum \$100,000 upon my retirement, and will challenge others to do the same. This will be key to building the fund over time to a substantial amount.

The goal would be to get the corpus to at least \$1 million to generate \$50,000 a year toward litigation, travel expenses for black hole awards, lobbying, public education, and perhaps part of the salary of a communications person. Even more money could accomplish astounding results. We are ideally poised to take this on. Most journalism organizations are 501c3s, so they are limited in their advocacy and lobbying. Not SPJ. We are a 501c6 and are unlimited in our ability to lobby, sue and advocate. It is our responsibility to the profession to advocate. All of this would free up SPJ dollars for other activities, meaning more SDX Foundation money would be available for journalism training and education.

START NOW

So what is needed to start this endowment? Board action to 1) approve dedicating lifetime memberships to the endowment, 2) allocate \$100,000 from LDF toward the endowment for match money, and 3) establish a policy of putting SPJ's excess funds in the endowment at the end of the fiscal year. We do not have to decide this in April. We can discuss this and put it on the agenda for the first meeting at EIJ14. At minimum, though, if there is general agreement in principle by the board, I can begin raising money for LDF now (e.g., talking to donors about potential matches, raffling off the president's suite for LDF), and then the endowment can be announced at EIJ14 if approved at the first meeting.

I ask for your support. Everyone wins, but the big winner is journalism and ultimately, society.

**MINUTES
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS
JULY 28, 2014
CONFERENCE CALL**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

With President David Cuillier presiding, the meeting of the board of directors of the Society of Professional Journalists was called to order at 2:05 p.m. on Monday, July 28, 2014, via conference call.

In addition to Cuillier, the following were present for all or a portion of the meeting: President-Elect Dana Neuts; Immediate Past President Sonny Albarado; Secretary-Treasurer Paul Fletcher; Vice President for Campus Chapter Affairs Sue Kopen Katcef; Director at-Large Carl Corry; Campus Advisers at-Large Kym Fox and Becky Tallent; Student Representative Lindsey Cook; Regional Directors Rebecca Baker, Andy Schotz, Michael Koretzky, Susan Stevens, David Sheets and Tony Hernandez.

Staff members on the call were Executive Director Joe Skeel and Chapter Coordinator Tara Puckey.

The purpose of the call was to appoint two board vacancies: Campus Representative and Region 11 Director.

Cuillier explained that this appointment would be for five weeks. Members would be voting for new candidates during the Excellence in Journalism conference in early September. However, filling the vacancies was important because the board would be voting on the proposed code of ethics in August – before the election would take place.

Baker pointed out that regardless of who the board appointed, it was incumbent upon SPJ to reach out to all candidates and find ways for them to remain engaged in SPJ.

For each position, the board discussed if the chosen candidate should be someone who plans to seek the office during the election, or someone who would be only a stop-gap. The group debated the pros and cons of each scenario.

CAMPUS REPRESENTATIVE

Cuillier asked the board to share their thoughts about any of the candidates.

The candidates were:

Daniel Axelrod, Ellen Eldridge, Jordan Gass-Porre, Brett Hall, Kathleen Quillian and David Schick.

Upon proper motion and second by Neuts and Stevens, respectively, the board appointed Brett Hall to the Campus Representative position by the following roll call vote (6 yes, 3 no, 3 abstain):

Fletcher: Yes
Neuts: Yes
Kopen Katcef: Yes
Albarado: Abstain
Corry: Yes
Fox: No
Tallent: No
Schotz: Yes
Koretzky: Abstain
Stevens: Yes
Sheets: Abstain
Hernandez: No

REGION 11 DIRECTOR

Cuillier asked the board to share their thoughts about any of the candidates. The board debated whether having chapter experience was critical to this position.

The candidates were:

Lauren Bartlett, Brian Bielanski, Molly Dugan, Matt Hall, Debra Krol, Maria Ortiz Briones, Sam Stewart and Elle Toussi.

Upon proper motion and second by Fletcher and Corry, respectively, the board appointed Matt Hall to the Region 11 Director position by the following roll call vote (7 yes, 1 no, 4 abstain):

Fletcher: Yes
Neuts: Yes
Kopen Katcef: Abstain
Albarado: Abstain
Corry: Yes
Fox: Yes
Tallent: Yes
Schotz: Yes
Koretzky: No
Stevens: Abstain
Sheets: Yes
Hernandez: Abstain

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:18 p.m., July 28, 2014.

**MINUTES
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS
AUGUST 20, 2014
SKYPE CONFERENCE CALL**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

With President David Cuillier presiding, the meeting of the board of directors of the Society of Professional Journalists was called to order at 7:03 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 20, 2014, via Skype conference call.

In addition to Cuillier, the following were present for all of a portion of the meeting: President-Elect Dana Neuts; Immediate Past President Sonny Albarado; Secretary-Treasurer Paul Fletcher; Vice President for Campus Chapter Affairs Sue Kopen Katcef; Director at-Large Carl Corry; Campus Advisers at-Large Kym Fox and Becky Tallent; Student Representatives Lindsey Cook and Brett Hall; Regional Directors Andy Schotz, Michael Koretzky, Patti Gallagher-Newberry, Joe Radske, David Sheets, Pia Hallenberg, Matt Hall and Tony Hernandez.

Staff members on the call were Executive Director Joe Skeel, Associate Executive Director Chris Vachon and Chapter Coordinator Tara Puckey.

The purpose of the call was to:

- Consider the application from the Digital Community.
- Make a recommendation on the most recent Ethics Code revision.

DIGITAL COMMUNITY

Neuts provided brief background on the Digital Community, including its current activity and short-term plans. She also answered questions from board members.

Upon proper motion and second by Neuts and Hernandez, respectively, the board voted to approve the Digital Community.

ETHICS CODE REVISION

Fletcher, who is also a member of the Ethics Committee, explained that the revision has been a year-long process. A number of concerns were appropriately raised about the process. Each time those concerns were raised, they were addressed.

He went on to explain the concept of a “living code,” later referred to by board members as the “annotated code.” The purpose of the annotated code is to live “behind” the Code of Ethics and provide more detailed explanations and examples of principles listed in the code.

Fletcher asked the board to consider the body of work, and that it vote to recommend to delegates to support the code as written.

To start discussion, Fletcher moved that the board recommend that the delegates adopt the latest code revision. The motion was seconded by Tallent.

Schotz pointed out that there were some small typos, and other things he felt weren't fully fleshed out. Some things he didn't agree with. He shared that he was hesitant about voting yes or no on the current version, specifically because of two main sticking points: The committee's inclusion of a principle on covering suicides and the lack of a principle on dealing with anonymous online commenters.

Other board members also shared their opinions:

- Hallenberg thanked the committee for its work, and liked the tone of the new code. She said it more accurately reflects the way many reporters work today. She asked if it would be prudent to present the code and revisit in a set time period, such as two years. She asked if that set review should be in the code.
- Addressing concerns about having the current code "line edited by delegates," Tallent shared that she was part of the group that revised the code in 1996. She said they expected the code to be picked apart at convention. They were shocked when it wasn't.
- Furthermore, Tallent said she likes that this is a "green-light" code, but recognized it isn't a perfect code. "Is it perfect, heck no it's not. No code is. If the rank and file membership wants to say no, so be it. I think it's time we (as a board) pushed it on."
- Albarado agreed with Tallent.
- Gallagher-Newberry had two main concerns regarding the information that is being put out to membership, specifically related to editing at EIJ and future revisions. In short: What's possible in Nashville and what's possible going forward. Can we define that in some way?
- Matt Hall stated that the board doesn't want to mislead people and have them think SPJ is going to review the code on a regular basis. "These aren't the 10 Commandments, but they are the Four Pillars. You don't rebuild your foundation every two years."
- Specifically, Hall asked if Social Media should be mentioned more. Also, he questioned the principle of *Weigh the consequences of publishing personal information, including that from social media*. Hall felt the phrase "personal information" was too vague.
- Hall also asked for an example of the "footnotes" or annotated code. Fletcher provided that and further explained that the social media question was hotly debated among the committee during its meeting in July.

Schotz moved that the board recommends to the delegates that they remove the following principle: *Be cautious about reporting suicides that do not involve a public person or a public place*.

It was seconded by Cook

Schotz disagrees with this because he said it seems to be pointing to a philosophy that it's taboo and should be kept private. Schotz said suicide is a public health issue. He went on to say the wording may actually work opposite of its intent: instead giving the implication that journalist don't need to be cautious when reporting suicides of public people or those that occur in public places.

Upon proper motion and second by Schotz and Cook, respectively, the board voted to recommend to delegates that it strike the following passage from the revised code: *Be cautious about reporting suicides that do not involve a public person or a public place.*

Schotz then moved that the board recommend to the delegates that the following passage be added: *Encourage a civil exchange of public opinions, in which participants don't mask their identities and poison the conversation. Recognize the potential harm of anonymous comments.*

Motion was seconded by Sue Kopen Katcef and discussion ensued.

Schotz said he felt like this would be a good opportunity for SPJ to take the lead on this, pointing to the comment sections on news sites that often devolve into vile, racist, non-helpful dialogue – sometimes changing the tone of the original news story.

Cook opposed the adding the principle, pointing out that news organizations around the country still haven't come to a conclusion on if public comments on websites are valuable or not.

M. Hall also spoke against the addition, stating that his job requires him to pull comments from the web – some of them anonymous. He also doesn't support singling out "online comments" since SPJ is trying to make the code platform neutral. He stated that he does support the notion of "Encourage a civil exchange of public opinions."

Vigorous debate continued for several minutes.

The motion failed on a roll call vote 10-5 against. The votes were as follows:

Corry: No
Neuts: No
Cook: No
Kopen Katcef: Yes
Radske: No
Hallenberg: Yes
Sheets: No
Schotz: Yes
M. Hall: No
Fox: No
Tallent: No
Gallagher-Newberry: No
Hernandez: Yes
Albarado: No
B. Hall: Yes

Gallagher-Newberry then moved that the board recommend to the delegates that they include the following passage in the revised code: *"Encourage news consumers to identify themselves and offer civil exchanges when offering feedback to news coverage or issues of the day."*

Hernandez provided a second for the motion.

After some debate, the motion failed on a voice vote.

Schotz made a third motion that the board recommend to the delegates that they include the following passage in the revised code:

"Encourage a civil exchange of public opinions. Recognize the potential harm of allowing anonymous online comments."

The motion was seconded by Koretzky.

The motion failed by voice vote.

Hearing no further motions or discussions, Cuillier called for a vote on Fletcher's original motion, including the amendment passed by the board regarding suicide coverage.

Upon proper motion and second by Fletcher and Tallent respectively, the SPJ Board of directors recommends that the delegates of EIJ14 adopt the latest revision of the Code of Ethics. It further recommends that the delegates vote to strike the following passage: "Be cautious about reporting suicides that do not involved a public person or public place."

The motion passed on a roll call vote of 11-4 in favor, with one abstention. The votes were as follows:

Cook: No
B. Hall: Yes
Neuts: Yes
Hernandez: Yes
Gallagher-Newberry: Yes
Koretzky: No
Albarado: Yes
Hallenberg: Yes
Fox: Yes
M. Hall: Yes
Schotz: No
Tallent: Yes
Kopen Katcef: Yes
Fletcher: Yes
Corry: No
Sheets: Abstain

Upon proper motion and second by Tallent and Neuts respectively, the SPJ Board of directors adjourned at 8:48 p.m. EST on Wednesday, Aug. 20.

DRAFT



SIGMA DELTA CHI
FOUNDATION

FOUNDED IN 1961

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 19, 2014
FROM: Robert Leger, President
SUBJ: President's Report
FOR: SDX Foundation Board of Directors, SPJ Board of Directors

I look forward to a great meeting and a great EIJ14.

We have a full agenda. We'll continue our conversation about taking full responsibility for the educational programming of SPJ, including Quill. You'll find separately a report from the combined SDX/SPJ executive committees on issues involved in the transition and recommendations on resolving them.

I continue to be a strong proponent of doing this, and urge the board to take the plunge for the 2015-16 fiscal year. It gives us a more proactive role, truly making us the educational foundation of SPJ. It frees SPJ to more fully focus on advocacy for better journalism and more open government. There are few risks in going down this road and no impediments to retracing our steps. Unlike media companies spinning off their newspaper divisions, if our transition doesn't work out we can simply hit command-Z and undo it.

That's my opinion. I look forward to hearing your thoughts.

PORTFOLIO

Despite its recent dip, the stock market has been good to SDX. Our portfolio at the end of July stood at \$12.7 million, up 3 percent for the year. That's after paying our grants and bills. Kudos to Howard Dubin and the finance committee for a solid investment strategy.

PULLIAM AWARDS

Committees led by Mac McKerral and Todd Gilman have selected winners for the two Pulliam awards.

- The Associated Press will receive the Pulliam First Amendment award and a check for \$10,000 for fighting back after the government grabbed its reporters' phone records.

"Spying on the public's watchdog raises the threat to a free and independent news media to an even higher level," the committee noted. "Rewarding the AP for its effort serves to refocus attention on this horrible incident and perhaps send notice that journalists haven't forgotten."

- Farah Stockman of the Boston Globe will receive the Pulliam Editorial Fellowship (and \$70,000) at the Association of Opinion Journalists convention in Mobile, Ala., Sept. 21-23. The daughter of a white father and black mother, she plans to study the effects of desegregation 40 years after busing sparked a violent reaction in Boston.

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She intends to use that history “as a starting point to spark a larger national conversation about race in America today and our prospects for successfully addressing inequalities of race and class in our schools in the future.”

Last year, you asked for updates on previous winners.

- The 2012 winner, Sandra Shea of the Philadelphia Daily News, completed her project this summer. It is linked from the fellowship page at spj.org, or you can go directly to philly.com/philly/news/257047041.html to read it.
-
- The 2013 winner, Hugh Bailey of the Connecticut Post, completed his eight-month sabbatical researching ways to reclaim abandoned industrial areas. His project is scheduled to run as a three-part series on consecutive Sundays in September.

Hugh encountered a shock when he returned to work: his job on the opinion page was eliminated. Once his project is completed he'll move to the business desk. Applicants for the fellowship are required to “secure assurances by the editor or publisher that the applicant will be allowed sufficient time to pursue the fellowship without jeopardizing employment.” We don't require a promise that the fellow will be able to return to the same job. Should we? Can we?

HISTORY BOOK

Marion Street Press continues to work on the book. I will be meeting with Jim Schuette in Nashville.

THANK YOU

I know it goes without saying, but I'll say it anyway. Thanks for everything you do for the SDX Foundation, SPJ and journalism.



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MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 19, 2014
FROM: Robert Leger, SDX Foundation President
SUBJ: Issues in the Transition between SPJ and SDX Foundation
FOR: SDX Foundation Board of Directors & SPJ Board of Directors

The executive committees of the SDX Foundation and SPJ met via e-mail and then a conference call to discuss issues involving the SDX Foundation taking responsibility for educational programming. On most issues, the group reached a quick consensus. On two, there was extended conversation, some of which extended beyond our conference call.

To summarize:

STAFFING

Some members expressed a concern that Chris' workload would become too much, and that no person could do well at juggling development and planning programs. Others asked if the foundation should have its own staff. Who, ultimately, looks out for the foundation's interests?

Joe described the current division of labor, which he envisions continuing under the new arrangement. Scott's time is devoted to Quill, planning training programs and setting up sessions for convention. In consultation with a small advisory committee, he comes up with the ideas and names of speakers. Heather takes charge of the logistics and details. Chris (as well as Joe) checks in and sees how things are going, just as she does with non-SPJ grant recipients. And Chris, of course, works on developing relationships with potential donors, applying for grants to extend our offerings (and leverage SPJ's dime) and executing development appeals.

So the question was asked: Should these people become foundation employees? That should be a goal, but it's not workable now. The staff does not operate in silos; there is a great deal of cross training so everyone can jump in and help where needed. Responsibilities overlap: the awards coordinator, for instance, handles SPJ's massive contests and coordinates the foundation's Pulliam awards.

If, in our new world, we are able to vastly increase our training operations, we would need more people. That would be the time to look at creating an SDX-specific staff.

The group anticipated further discussion on this issue by the board.

SDX FOUNDATION BOARD MEMBERSHIP

This discussion revolved around two issues: Is the board too big? Does it need greater diversity in age and background? This discussion continued via email after our call, and there may be more to report beyond what follows.

A key point was raised by Jane Kirtley: Figuring out what the board is supposed to be is critical to the new direction.

There was some sentiment that the board should be smaller, but also an acknowledgement that the board is its current size because it's the best place for former presidents to continue to contribute. Steve mentioned that he had once contemplated the idea of creating an advisory group of former presidents, who could have a set number of representatives on the foundation board.

The programming committee was seen as the place where younger voices were most needed. Dana Neuts and Irwin Gratz suggested making that a composite committee of foundation members and younger SPJ members. (This would be similar to the makeup of the group currently advising Scott Leadingham on convention.) Sonny Albarado later noted this would also be a way to develop younger people for board membership.

Others offered the idea of term limits or possibly term "suggestions," with the option of returning to the board after sitting out a term. Todd Gillman, though, spoke in defense of "old geezers," noting how much he valued the advice of men and women with extensive experience in the organization.

Again, we anticipate further discussion by the board on this issue.

ISSUES ON WHICH THERE WAS CONSENSUS:

- SDX will continue to support EIJ, and SPJ will no longer submit grant requests for the awards coordinator, chapter grants and other SPJ activities.
- Investment policy should be left alone.
- Bylaws changes (SPJ)
 - Quill Trust. Clean up the language at some point in the future.
 - In principle, give SDX a role in selecting the executive director, reflecting more active role. Details to be worked out.
- SDX committee structure
 - Current committees:
 - Exec (officers, immediate past president & committee chairs)
 - Grants and Awards
 - Development.
 - Finance
 - Governance (becomes an ad hoc committee)
 - Proposed new committees:
 - Programming & projects. (points were raised that this group is most in need of age diversity and needs to guard against micromanaging)

- Quill (some role in advising on content, but primarily in examining best model for Quill: print and online, or online only).
- No need for an exit plan. If it doesn't work out, hit Control-Z. (Another reason not to rush bylaws changes.)



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MEMORANDUM

DATE: Sept. 4, 2014
FROM: Tara Puckey, Chapter Coordinator
SUBJ: Centralization Concept
FOR: SPJ Board of Directors

CENTRALIZED GROUPS

As you'll read below in the memo prepared for the Executive Committee back in June, we've been working hard to figure out different ways to engage our membership and respond to their needs appropriately.

We're currently working with the folks in Nebraska who are eager to try this concept. I'll be working with them closely over the next several months as we figure out what works and what doesn't and will be prepared to give you a full update when we meet again in April.

Memorandum from Executive Committee Meeting in June 2014:

A BIT OF BACKGROUND

Administrative red tape has always been a challenge for our chapters - from annual reports to filing 990s. The latter has become more problematic since 2006, when the IRS ruled that ALL chapters under parent non-profits file a 990. Previously, only those making more than \$25,000 were required to file the 990.

The reality is: it isn't getting done. Within the past year, more than 11 of our chapters have lost their non-profit status with the IRS. This occurs when chapters fail to file 990s for three consecutive years. What does this mean? It means they're essentially operating as a for-profit company, which means they're subject to income taxes and penalties, if applicable. And as a for-profit company, they are still required to file tax paperwork. In fact, it's more in-depth than the e-Postcard they're currently required to file as a subordinate chapter of SPJ.

Getting the status back is a long, expensive process, one that few chapters have the time, money or resources to take on when their ultimate goal is, in many cases, to do great journalism "stuff." Once they lose their status, the IRS doesn't allow SPJ national to simply "put them back on the rolls."

SO WHAT DO WE DO?

SPJ is not alone. Since the IRS ruling in 2006, many organizations with a chapter structure are seeing this as a growing problem. Because of that, many are moving to a more centralized structure.

What does that mean? Organizations are disbanding the official chapter structure and instead have individuals or groups that simply do work throughout the

country on behalf of the national organization. For us, it would mean we strip away the red tape and allow people with boots on the ground to do good journalism work in the name of SPJ.

These “groups,” for lack of a better term, might want to host a program about open records, or meet up and have a few drinks. They can do those things, and others that support the missions of SPJ, without a board, without an EIN and without having to worry about filing a 990.

HOW WOULD THAT WORK?

These “groups” are essentially a part of the national organization, so they’re doing work on behalf of SPJ. They won’t file annual reports, have bank accounts, raise funds, conduct elections, file 990s, conduct a contest or host an awards dinner.

At the same time, they won’t get delegates at the national convention and won’t be eligible for chapter awards or grants. They aren’t independent entities, so the national organization has the ability to make decisions when it comes to how and what they do.

Their ideas for programming would be funneled through HQ, where we’ll help negotiate space, manage any registration, sponsorship and pick up costs, if necessary. We’ll help promote it and recap the event, with the help of organizers, when it’s over. If the same group does another program, great. If not, that’s fine, too.

WHY IS THIS GOOD?

Reaching more members: Allowing pop-up programs and networking without the administrative and logistical headaches will help more members feel connected with SPJ. They would have the opportunity to attend programs and meet people near them even if there is no local chapter.

More passionate ideas: Often, our chapters struggle to plan events. It’s something they *should* do, so they figure out a way to make it happen. Sometimes if for no other reason than: “we’ve always done an FOI program...” This concept will allow people who are truly passionate about specific topics in journalism to pitch, plan and produce programs that are important to them, which leads to better programs.

Another option: With the changes and challenges facing membership associations, it’s important that SPJ put forth a buffet of options for the journalism community. Maybe someone doesn’t want to volunteer for board meetings and budgets, but they’re a valuable asset to SPJ in other ways. We’ve got to have something that meets these interests.

Help for struggling chapters: We currently have a few chapters on the books that are struggling to keep up with the minimum requirements, and a few that are fighting to get started. This is a viable option for them. Switching from a chapter to this model will take away a significant portion of their workload and allow them to focus all their energies on what they really want to do: programming and networking.

MOVING FORWARD

It’s important to remember that this concept isn’t replacing anything, it’s simply supplementing the options that members have in finding what works for them in their local area.

If they have an active board, no trouble financing their programs and like operating independently, then a chapter is probably best for them. If an organized group of people is interested in education reporting but they live all across the country, a community might be perfect for them.

If they're a small group, or even one person, interested in conducting journalism training or networking – but not interested in paperwork, elections and bylaws – this might be just the ticket.



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MEMORANDUM

DATE: Sept. 4, 2014
FROM: Tara Puckey, Chapter Coordinator
SUBJ: Chapter Action
FOR: SPJ Board of Directors

SEEKING TO BE CHARTERED

California State University – Sacramento Region 11

CHAPTERS TO INACTIVATE

This list is longer because we're entering the end of our "cleaning the garage" phase. Chapters that did not file an annual report for the last two years (and have had no contact with myself or the regional directors) are listed.

Region 1

Boston College
Curry College
Lyndon State College
Temple University
Wilkes University

Region 3

Georgia College & State
Georgia Southern University
Georgia State University

Region 4

Kent State
Western Michigan University

Region 5

Ball State University
Franklin College
Louisville Collegiate Satellite
University of Southern Indiana

Region 6

Marquette University
University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee

Region 7

Iowa State

University of Iowa

Region 8

Oklahoma State
Southern Methodist University
Stephen F. Austin University
Texas Christian University
Texas Tech
Texas Woman's University

Region 9

Southern Utah University
University of Colorado
Wyoming Pro

Region 10

University of Idaho

Region 11

California State – Long Beach
Pepperdine University – Malibu
University of Arizona

Region 12

Arkansas State University
East Tennessee State
Greater Tri-Cities Pro



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MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 17, 2014
FROM: Dana Neuts, SPJ President-Elect
SUBJ: Community Update
FOR: SPJ Board of Directors

FREELANCE COMMUNITY

The Freelance Community received official approval from the board in April 2014. Since then, the community has launched a beta version of its online community available at <http://www.spj.org/freelance.asp>. Most of the tools are behind the paywall, requiring members to sign in to access the discussion forum, job board, individual freelance directory bios, etc. Other tools, like the freelance community’s Twitter accounts (@SPJFreelance and @SPJFreelanceCom) and the [Independent Journalist’s blog](#), are open to anyone. Note: @SPJFreelance is actively monitored and used by members of the freelance community. @SPJFreelanceCom is an auto-feed from the discussion forum.

To date, participation in the community has been limited, probably due to limited marketing and community outreach. I am working with the current community leader Michael Fitzgerald and SPJ volunteer Robyn Sekula to create a marketing plan, improve outreach and initiate a meet-up at EIJ14 to improve participation. The community has largely retained the committee structure with only a few people doing all the work. To grow, we need to reach out to other SPJ members and freelancers.

I believe this community has tremendous potential. As the first community, we have learned what worked and what hasn’t, so that additional communities can grow more quickly and organically.

Thanks to Michael Fitzgerald and other members of the freelance committee, as well as to Billy O’Keefe, for their patience in getting this first community off the ground. It is a work in progress.

SPJ DIGITAL

Earlier this summer SPJ member Alex Veeneman came to me, proposing the formation of a digital community. The first step was to determine interest, so we began an informal campaign via Twitter and SPJ Leads to see if we would have the minimum 20 members. Within a week, we had at least that many and Alex submitted the application to me at the end of July.

Since that time, with SPJ’s approval, Alex created a Twitter account (@SPJDigital), [a Google + community](#) and, as the group’s informal leader, has access to the [Net Worked blog](#) and has already written a post. He has been introduced to Scott Leadingham, so that he and other SPJ members of SPJ Digital can contribute content to Quill. The community currently has about 30 members,

though they are not all active members of SPJ. After discussion with Tara Puckey, we agreed that we can't restrict access to the public tools like Twitter and Google + to just SPJ members. However, only SPJ members can contribute to Quill and to the Net Worked blog.

SPJ Digital has gotten off to an enthusiastic start, but we are trying to grow smartly, adding tools as they make sense, rather than creating a smorgasbord of options like we did with the freelance community which, in retrospect, slowed things down.

Until elections are held at EIJ14, Alex is monitoring SPJ Digital tools and content, with oversight by Tara and myself, and Alex has been asked to check in with us on any areas or situations that are unclear. For example, an enthusiastic member has urged us to create an encryption subgroup of SPJ Digital. For now, we are holding off until the core community proves its success. Then we can branch off in areas that make sense and represent a clear need or common interest for the community.

The community asked for official approval by the SPJ board during its Aug. 20, 2014 phone call.

GENERATION J

Over the summer, Gen J chair Claudia Amezcua and I have had several conversations about the desire to transform the Gen J committee into a community. Under Lynn Walsh's leadership, the committee thrived and grew. However, since she stepped down and others have stepped into the leadership role, committee participation has lagged and Claudia and a few other committee members are doing much of the work.

Claudia feels, and I agree, that a community structure might help infuse some new life into the group, as well as expand its purpose. Rather than focusing strictly on younger journalists, she wants to focus on this – “What is changing in journalism and what do I need to know now?” This is a question that applies to young journalists but also mid and late career journalists in transition. She'd like to grow the Gen J mentor program, expand the resume and clip critiques, and offer other resources to better serve the community.

Claudia has at least one strong member of the current committee who she thinks can help her lead the committee/community into the future, but we are looking for another strong individual to help her gauge interest and grow the community. I have talked with a possible candidate who is currently vetting the concept to determine his level of interest and what his potential participation would be. I am waiting for Claudia and this SPJ member to connect and get back with me. By the time EIJ rolls around, it is possible we will have made some progress in this area. For now, we are in a holding pattern.

SUMMARY

As we add communities, we are learning from past mistakes and building on small successes with the goal of creating new ways to serve SPJ members and by giving them new ways to connect and interact with each other while also furthering SPJ's mission. As noted above, the president will provide support with the communities being largely self-governing. Staff support will come from Tara Puckey and Billy O'Keefe.

In the coming year, I'd like to focus on growing SPJ Freelance and SPJ Digital and putting Gen J on a path to success, whether it is to retain the committee structure or to morph into a community. Other potential communities could be International, stemming from the currently inactive International Committee, and perhaps a student-centric community.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.



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MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 17, 2014
FROM: Dana Neuts, SPJ President-Elect
SUBJ: Committee Chair appointments
FOR: SPJ Board of Directors

Dear SPJ Board of Directors,

I respectfully request your approval of the following committee chair and co-chair appointments for the 2014-2015 SPJ year.

AWARDS & HONORS COMMITTEE

Chair: Andy Schotz

Andy Schotz is a managing editor for The Gazette weekly newspapers in Montgomery County, Md., near Washington, D.C. He has been an SPJ member since 2002 and has held various positions on the Washington, D.C. Pro chapter board, including three consecutive one-year terms as president. He served on the SPJ Ethics Committee from 2004 to 2011, including three years as chairman.

Schotz ran unsuccessfully for at-large director on the national SPJ board in 2012. The following year, he ran unopposed for Region 2 director.

He is a perennial SPJ contest judge (D.C. Pro Dateline Awards, SDX, Mark of Excellence, Green Eyeshade, high school essay) and has twice coordinated Region 2's Mark of Excellence contest.

He joined the SPJ Awards & Honors Committee in 2013 and helped work on a national survey seeking feedback about the MOE contest. Before joining The Gazette in January 2013, Schotz worked for eight years as a reporter and editor at The Altamont Enterprise, a weekly paper in upstate New York, then for 13 years as a reporter for The Herald-Mail, a daily paper in Hagerstown, Md. He is on the board of directors of the International Society of Weekly Newspaper Editors. You can follow him on Twitter at @AndrewSchotz and @SPJRegion2.

Co-chair: Sarah Bauer

Sarah Bauer is the Program Director for the Minnesota Newspaper Association, a voluntary association of all newspapers in the state, and is a former executive director of the Minnesota News Council. Bauer manages all training programs for MNA, oversees its annual Better Newspaper Contest and coordinates its annual convention that attracts more than 600 newspaper professionals from around Minnesota. Bauer speaks regularly about media ethics, community journalism, the history of press councils, and other journalism-related issues with visiting foreign journalists, in high school and college classrooms, as well as newsrooms.

For the past decade, Bauer has been involved with the Society of Professional Journalists as member and chapter leader, at the student and professional levels. She currently serves a past president and secretary of the Minnesota Pro Chapter, where she chairs the contest committee and serves on the membership committee. She was previously president of the University of Minnesota student chapter. Bauer has also served on SPJ's national membership committee, as faculty for the Scripps Leadership Institute. Bauer graduated from the University of Minnesota with degrees in journalism and philosophy.

DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

Chair: April Bethea

April Bethea is an online producer at The Charlotte Observer where she helps highlight, curate and create content for our website and other digital platforms. She joined the online team in 2013 after more than eight years as a reporter covering topics including county government, education, and breaking news. Bethea is secretary of the Greater Charlotte chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists. She was a 2013 SPJ Diversity Leadership Fellow and attended the Ted Scripps Leadership Institute.

Bethea also is a member of the National Association of Black Journalists and served as president of its Charlotte chapter when it relaunched nearly a decade ago. She was a fellow this spring with the Kiplinger Program in Public Affairs Journalism. Outside of work, Bethea volunteers with Hands on Charlotte and enjoys attending local theatre productions when she can. Learn more about her work at www.aprilbethea.com and on Twitter at @AprilBethea.

Co-chair: Georgiana Vines

Georgiana Vines is retired associate editor of the Knoxville News Sentinel in Tennessee. She continues to write a political column twice a week for the paper and does other stories on assignment. After retiring, she became the Frank Ahlgren Distinguished Lecturer in Journalism and Electronic Media at the University of Tennessee, teaching public affairs reporting, media management and business journalism. She has nearly 50 years of experience as a journalist, including as the last editor of the Herald-Post in El Paso, Tex., when The E.W. Scripps Co. closed the paper in 1997.

Her activity in the Society of Professionals Journalists includes serving in a number of national offices, including president in 1992-93. She received SPJ's Wells Key, its highest honor for volunteerism and the profession, in 1996. She also served as a member and secretary of the Sigma Delta Chi Foundation board of directors. She is an ex officio board member and a past president of the SPJ East Tennessee Pro Chapter. In the Knoxville community, she is a coordinator of Friends of St. John's Episcopal Cathedral, an outreach ministry, and is 2013-15 chair of the Clarence Brown Theatre advisory board.

ETHICS COMMITTEE

Chair: Andrew Seaman

Andrew is a medical journalist at Reuters in New York City. Before reporting on health and medicine, he worked from the Reuters Washington bureau, where he covered health policy and the White House. His work has appeared in USA Today, The Washington Post, The New York Times and a number of other publications.

Andrew joined SPJ while a student at Wilkes University in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. While serving in various positions in his school chapters during his undergraduate and graduate schooling, he also served as a student representative to the national board. In addition to being a member of the Ethics Committee, he's also been an active member of the Generation-J Committee and chair of the Awards and Honors Committee.

Co-chair: Monica Guzman

Monica is a [Sunday columnist for The Seattle Times](#) and a [weekly columnist for GeekWire](#), covering issues in digital life. She was a juror for the 2014 Pulitzer Prizes, serves on the National Advisory Board for the Poynter Institute and contributed the closing chapter, "Community As an End," to the 2013 Poynter book "[The New Ethics of Journalism: Principles for the 21st Century](#)." From 2007 to 2010, Monica launched and ran the innovative Big Blog at the Seattle Post-Intelligencer and [seattlepi.com](#), complementing news and culture coverage with weekly reader meetups. From 2010 to 2012 she developed user communities for Seattle startups like Intersect, Trover and Glympse before kicking off her Times column.

A member of the World Economic Forum's Global Shapers community, Monica emceeds the popular quarterly community speaker series Ignite Seattle and is assisting the American Press Institute with a newsroom innovation project. Monica served on the ethics code revision task force and is an active member of the Western Washington Pro chapter of SPJ. She is currently serving as chapter president. You can learn more about Monica at <http://moniguzman.com>. Follow her on Twitter at @moniguzman.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Chair: Dave Cuillier

David Cuillier, Ph.D., is director of the University of Arizona School of Journalism, where he researches and teaches access to public records, and is co-author with Charles Davis of "The Art of Access: Strategies for Acquiring Public Records." He served as FOI chair 2007-11 before becoming a national officer and serving as SPJ president in 2013-14.

Before entering academia, he was a newspaper reporter and editor in the Pacific Northwest. He has testified before Congress on FOI issues twice and provides newsroom training in access on behalf of SPJ. His long-term goal is to see a unified coalition of journalism organizations fighting for press freedom and funded through an endowed FOI war chest. You can learn more about Dave at <http://journalism.arizona.edu/david-cuillier> or by following him on Twitter at @DavidCuillier.

Co-chair: TBD

FREELANCE

N/A – now a community, elections to be held

GENERATION J

In flux, now a committee, hoping to become a community

Chair: Claudia Amezcua

Claudia Amezcua is freelance multimedia journalist based in Los Angeles, CA. Her clients include CNN, KFON-TV, and InlandEmpire.com. Previously, she served as anchor/reporter for 90.1 KSAK where she won numerous awards in entertainment reporting and best use of sound. Additionally, Claudia dabbles in sports blogging from a women's perspective via her blog A Chicks Guide 2 Sports. She is also a member of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists and a 2014 graduate of Scripps. Follow her on Twitter (@ClaudiaAmezcua) or read more about her life at <http://claudiaamezcua.com>.

Co-chair: Jennifer Nicole Sullivan

Jennifer Nicole Sullivan is the vintage clothing writer/editor at About.com in New York City. She also writes about fashion, arts and entertainment for Newport Mercury and various publications. Previously, Jennifer was a copywriter at Real Simple (a Time Inc. magazine), a staff writer at Newport Mercury in Rhode Island and a features reporter at the Corpus Christi Caller-Times. Her work has appeared in Quartz (QZ.com), Real Simple, Quill, Rhode Island Home & Design, Military Spouse, Newport Patch and several other publications.

Additionally, Jennifer lived in Yokosuka, Japan, for two years and taught English to Japanese children and adults. The Dallas native graduated from The University of Texas at Austin with degrees in radio-TV-film and theater and from The University of Rhode Island with a master's degree in English. Read her published articles at <http://jennifernicolesullivan.com>.

JOURNALISM EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Chair: Butler Cain

Butler Cain is an [Assistant Professor of Mass Communication](#) at West Texas A&M University in Canyon, Texas. He received a Ph.D. in Media History from the University of Alabama, where he also received degrees in Journalism. He spent a decade as news director of Alabama Public Radio in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, before moving to South Korea to teach English language skills to Korean students.

Butler has been a member of SPJ since 1997. He is a founding member of the Texas Panhandle Pro SPJ chapter in Amarillo, Texas, and has served on the Journalism Education Committee and the International Journalism Committee. Butler blogs about travel and journalism at www.butlercain.com and is on Twitter at [@ButlerCain](#). You can also find him on [LinkedIn](#).

Co-chair: June Nicholson

June O. Nicholson, a professor of journalism in the School of Media and Culture at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Va., chaired national SPJ's Journalism Education Committee from 2000-2007. She is former chair of the SPJ's International Journalism Committee and has been a member of other national SPJ committees over the past several decades. She is co-developer of the SPJ newsroom training module on covering diverse communities. Nicholson also is a former president of the Virginia professional chapter of SPJ.

Nicholson is the 2014 recipient of the Outstanding Woman in Journalism and Mass Communications Education Award from Commission on the Status of Women of the Association of Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. In 2008, she was recipient of the Robert Knight Multicultural Award for promoting diversity in America's newsrooms, given by AEJMC's Scholastic Journalism Division. She was recipient of the Distinguished Service Award of VCU's College of Humanities in 2007 for contributions to VCU and the journalism profession. She is serving a second term as president of the University Faculty Senate through August 2015.

Nicholson teaches senior-level capstone undergraduate government, enterprise and project reporting courses and coverage of specialized areas such as science, health, education, urban affairs and the environment. She also teaches a graduate course on International Journalism in the M.S. program in Mass Communications with a specialization in multimedia journalism. Before joining the VCU faculty, she was a reporter and editor for more than a dozen years in North Carolina and Virginia. She holds a master's degree in public affairs journalism from The American University in Washington, D.C., and a B.A. degree in journalism from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

LEGAL DEFENSE FUND

Chair: Hagit Limor

Hagit Limor's experience with SPJ includes stints as National President; National President-Elect; National Secretary-Treasurer; National Membership Committee; National Finance Committee Chair; current National Legal Defense Fund Committee chair; National Chair of Executive Director Search Committee; Board Member of the Sigma Delta Chi Foundation; and Greater Cincinnati Pro Chapter President, membership chairman and current chapter treasurer.

Outside of SPJ, she serves in dual roles as a professor at the University of Cincinnati's Electronic Media Department and as WXIX-TV's Emmy and national award-winning investigative reporter. Her abilities as a writer and reporter have garnered Hagit more than 100 national, state and local awards, including ten Emmy awards, a National Headliner Award, three national Sigma Delta Chi Awards and as a national finalist with the Investigative Reporters and Editors Association. Hagit received bachelor's and master's degrees in journalism from the Medill School of Journalism, Northwestern University.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Chair: Robyn Sekula

Robyn Davis Sekula is President of the Louisville Pro Chapter of SPJ. She is a Twitter addict, iPhone-a-holic, writer, speaker and social media consultant. She has spoken frequently at regional SPJ conferences and in 2012 at the national Excellence in Journalism Conference. She spent most of her pre-freelance career as a newspaper reporter, working as a crime and courts reporter in North Carolina, a business editor in Missouri and as a reporter at *Business First* in Louisville, Ky.

Robyn primarily consults with organizations and business in public relations, communications plans and social media strategy. You can find her web site at www.robymdavissekula.com, follow her on Twitter @itsRobynwithay, friend her on Facebook at www.facebook.com/robymdavissekula, add her on Instagram (username robyndsekula), and, of course, add her on Yo (user name itsRobynwithay). Her e-mail is robyn@robymds.com.

Co-chair: TBD



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MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 4, 2014
FROM: Steve Geimann
SUBJ: Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications Summer/Fall report
FOR: SPJ Board of Directors

The Accrediting Council expanded its ranks and may add as many as five programs in each of the next two academic years while two schools exit in 2015. It also has a new president, lost a veteran professional member and reported improved performance among schools.

RANKS SWELL

The Council granted initial accreditation without opposition to a record five programs: City University of New York's graduate program, Technologico de Monterrey in Mexico City, California State at Long Beach, Loyola University New Orleans and the University of Idaho. The Council now accredits 116 schools after decisions May 2 in Arlington, Va.

Cal State Long Beach was denied reaccreditation in 1997 after failing five of the then-12 standards. Idaho spent more than a decade preparing. Technologico de Monterrey is the third non-U.S. program after Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Chile and Qatar University.

The graduate journalism program at CUNY joins Columbia and New York University as accredited programs in New York City.

ALASKA OUTLIER

Just one program – Alaska-Anchorage – was placed on provisional status, pending steps to remedy deficiencies in student services, including a lack of adequate counseling and course offerings, and revise an uneven process to assess student learning. The Department of Journalism and Public Communications had a low 17 percent graduation rate.

The Council reaccredited 14 programs: Buffalo State, Hampton, Hofstra, Jacksonville State, Kansas State, Michigan State, Nevada-Reno, New Mexico, Oklahoma State, San Francisco State, Southern Illinois-Carbondale, Temple, Tennessee-Chattanooga and Tennessee-Martin. Southern, Auburn and the graduate program at South Dakota State were reaccredited after correcting deficiencies noted in 2012.

FEWER DEMERITS

For a second consecutive academic year, just four of the nine standards tripped up units, a significant improvement from a decade earlier. All reviewed programs met the diversity standard for the first time in six years, and complied on

curriculum for a second straight year. Compliance with the assessment standard has been improving, with 22 percent of programs found non-compliant this year, down from 43 percent in 2008-09 and a high of 46 percent in 2010-11. All units met the professional and public service standard every year since 2009-10.

Site teams for 2013-14 found seven schools out of compliance with at least one standard. Five schools failed on assessment: Alaska-Anchorage, Kansas State, Temple, Tennessee-Chattanooga and Tennessee Martin. Anchorage also was non complaint on student services. Hampton failed on faculty scholarship and San Francisco was deficient on faculty.

COMING, GOING

Zayed University in the United Arab Emirates, Anahuyac University in Mexico – tied to the Catholic Legionaries of Christ – American University in Dubai, North Alabama and Sony Brook on Long Island are scheduled to host site-visit teams through February, aiming to win initial accreditation. If all succeed, the Council will accredit six programs outside the U.S., with at least as many seeking accreditation in the next two cycles.

In total, 28 units will be visited during the academic year with one re-visit from 2013.

The University of Southern Indiana and Jackson State in Mississippi will let their accreditation lapse in May. Jackson State, which has had a bumpy history, is converting to a School from a department and may return in the future. Southern Indiana is changing its curriculum to let students take more courses in the department, which would breach the Council's goal of limiting courses taken in the department to encourage a broader educational foundation.

BOARDMAN RISES

David Boardman, dean of the School of Media and Communication at Temple University, became Council president at the Aug. 22 meeting in Chicago. Boardman, until last year executive editor and vice president of The Seattle Times, succeeded Peter Bhatia, who served seven years. Bhatia, who until March was executive editor at The Oregonian in Portland, will remain on the Council representing the American Society of News Editors. Bhatia now teaches at Arizona State University.

Broadcasters Larry Abramson, formerly of NPR, and Willow Bay, a former ABC News anchor, were named academic administrators. Abramson took over as dean of Montana's journalism school. Bay is director of the University of Southern California's Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism.

COCHRAN DEPARTS

Barbara Cochran, who joined the Council in 1997 to represent the Radio-Television News Directors Association, attended her final meeting May 2. She was replaced by Mike Cavender, executive director of the Radio Television Digital News Association and Foundation. Cochran, a former CBS News Washington bureau chief and managing editor of the defunct Washington Star, will continue on site visits. Cavender is a former news director in Atlanta, Tampa and Nashville, and a partner with SPJ in the annual Excellence in

Journalism conference.

###

ACEJMC meets twice a year to set policies, and review and accredit programs for six years. Each year, teams of educators and practitioners visit schools to assess their compliance with nine standards. A Council seat costs \$3,000 a year. School annual dues are \$1,000.

I am scheduled to visit Central Michigan University in October. A year ago, I visited Hofstra. I now have reviewed 17 schools in 15 states. I lead the Council's finance committee.

The Council, founded in 1945, accredits 116 journalism, public relations, advertising or telecommunications programs, has representatives from 11 industry and six educational groups. SPJ has been a member since 1996. After 17 years, I am among the senior Council members.



MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 4, 2014
FROM: Andrew Seaman, Chairman Awards and Honors Committee
SUBJ: Awards and Honors report
FOR: SPJ Board of Directors

ONGOING

The Student Union will take on a new format at Excellence in Journalism 2014.

- The ceremony will be held in the evening, when few other activities are scheduled, to encourage more participation.
- All Mark of Excellence winners will be recognized on the projection screen during the ceremony. Winners in attendance will be invited on stage to be recognized.

GOING FORWARD

The new chair of the Awards & Honors Committee will take over at Excellence in Journalism 2014.

- Going forward the committee will need to review the extensive changes that were implemented the previous year to the Mark of Excellence Awards and some smaller changes to the Sigma Delta Chi Awards.
 - The Mark of Excellence Awards – for the most part – were cut back from three division (large, medium and small schools) to two (large and small schools). The committee also introduced a handful of new categories and collapsed some underperforming categories into each other.
 - The changes to the Sigma Delta Chi Awards were relatively minor and mostly dealt with the submission process for a few of the categories.
- The committee will also need to coordinate with headquarters to continue any plans set in motion by Chad Hosier, who was SPJ's awards coordinator until August.
 - Specifically, Chad was seeking an outside organization to administer the judging for the annual high school essay contest. The award will still come from SPJ. The move will free up some staff time at SPJ headquarters.
 - While he's no longer SPJ's awards coordinator, I want to thank Chad for his service and cooperation. His drive and management delivered great returns for the organization with a record number of MOE entries this year and donations for the awards ceremonies.

Committee members: Rebecca Baker, Jay Evensen, Sue Kopen Katcef, Mark Lodato (vice chair), Lisa Rollins, Andy Shots



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MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 4, 2014
FROM: Sandra Gonzalez, Chairwoman Diversity Committee
SUBJ: Diversity Committee report
FOR: SPJ Board of Directors

REVOLVING DOOR OF DOCUMENTS

As the EIJ14 conference is coming up, Georgiana Vines and I have been working to put a panel together to discuss the arrival of documents popping up in various states, from voter identification cards to driver privilege cards for undocumented residents. If it hasn't hit your state yet (journalists at conference), then it probably will. We will look at the controversies surrounding these forms of IDs, how to cover the issues before and after implementation.

MANAGEMENT TRAINING

The Diversity Committee is in the midst of putting together a plan to help someone transition into management. We believe if diversity is going to flourish in our industry, then we need more managers of diverse background to be at the decision-making table for better coverage and perspectives on the communities we serve. Walter Middlebrook has offered much input on this matter.

QUILL

Filling our slot in the Quill has been challenging, finding writers to step forward, but was very proud of the contributions by Tracy Everbach and Robert Moran. Tracy wrote about courageous female journalists covering dangerous stories in Mexico, and Robert wrote about issues surrounding news coverage and mental illness.

FELLOWS

I have made efforts to stay on top of our '13 Diversity Fellows. Francisco Vara Orta served on a committee in San Antonio hosting the 2014 Conference for the National Association of Hispanic Journalists. While I was unable to attend, from what I could gather through extensive social media on the event, that it was very successful. Vianna Davila has flourished as a transportation reporter in San Antonio. In fact all the fellows chosen last year have continued to grow in their careers with much success in their jobs. I am very pleased with Jocylene Pruna who has served on the Diversity committee this year.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Sally Lehrman and Robert Moran have done an excellent job helping to keep our Facebook and Twitter pages active. One area I hope we could improve on is the blog, but we were happy to receive some help through the contributions of Clyde Hughes.

STYLE GUIDE

We were approached by Rachele Kanigel who has compiled a complete and comprehensive diversity style guide, and have written a letter of support in her efforts. We believe this project would be a valuable tool in all newsrooms.

RAINBOW SOURCE BOOK

Sally Lehrman has kept the Diversity Committee up to speed on the progress to get the book updated. We had an RFP but it seems it didn't attract much attention.

OUTREACH

Each of our members has remained not only active in this committee but in making strides in other areas of journalism and media. Robert was selected to make a documentary/film project he proposed. Tracy Everbach will be in leadership soon in SPJ Fort Worth, I have remained active in the Las Vegas chapter of SPJ and also NAHJ where we have held workshops and panels to help us better cover our communities from the Affordable Care Act, to immigration, to domestic violence. The organizations have worked well together and support each others' endeavors.

DIVERSITY FELLOWS 2014

We look forward to meeting and interacting with the incoming fellows. We appreciate SPJ/SDX's support of this program, and believe it is of high importance, and a wise investment in news coverage of our nation as it continues to evolve and shift.



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MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 4, 2014
FROM: Kevin Smith, Ethics Committee Chairman
SUBJ: Ethics Committee report
FOR: SPJ Board of Directors

ETHICS CODE:

After 11 months of work, your SPJ Ethics Committee has produced for its membership what we believe is the best code of ethics in the Society’s history. From an idea four years ago to conception this year, this new revision firmly entrenches SPJ again as the leader in media ethics. There isn’t much doubt here among those who study, research and teach media ethics that this code will be reproduced, emulated and transported across this globe as the benchmark for ethical standards.

The matter in which we handed this revision was always professional, intellectual and inclusive. From the end of last year’s convention until the start of this one, we explored varied options, sought varying viewpoints, put together a committee that reflected the professional and amateur landscape and polled members and journalists from outside SPJ. The end result is a solid code that represents everyone and provides a vast array of resources to support it beyond the single document.

I’d be remiss if I didn’t use this report to thank the committee for its incredible work. From the core committee members to those we added for this revision, so much time and commitment was shown to this cause. I couldn’t expect or ask for a nobler group of journalists. I am honored to have chaired this committee and lead this outstanding group of minds in our project.

Also, without the leadership of president Dave Cuillier and the commitment of headquarters’ involvement, headed by executive director Joe Skeel, we might not be where we are today. Both were invaluable in helping navigate this code through SPJ channels.

Also, a heartfelt thanks to the executive committee and this board for work you’ve done over the past year to make this possible as well. Holding sessions at regional conferences and sharing information in your region, on your campuses, was an enormous help. Taking the time to hold Podcasts, send emails and champion the code worked wonders.

It may take a village to raise a child, but it requires a nation to revise our ethical standards. Thank you.

In order to keep this report manageable, I’ll refer you to the section on SPJ’s website for additional information <http://www.spj.org/ethicscode-revision.asp>.

If you have specific concerns while at convention, I encourage you to attend our town hall meeting on Friday, 9:30-10:10 a.m.

On a side note, as I'm preparing this report I received a call from a retired editor of a top major daily who has been teaching ethics at the university level for five years. He is working on the second edition of his ethics textbook and has been following our code development for the past year. He told me today he thinks this is the best code SPJ has written and it will be the hallmark of his book once it's passed. As an old school guy, he had nothing but praise about the modifications made to be more contemporary. I think his assessment is on target and I agree it will be trumpeted as one of the best codes in all of media when it passes.

HOTLINE

This was another busy year for the SPJ Ethic Hotline, exceeding 300 calls and emails for the fourth straight year. Calls were handled primarily by vice chairman Fred Brown and myself.

Calls haven't varied much in terms of theme in the past four years, with conflicts of interest getting the most attention, followed by sourcing issues, plagiarism and privacy matters. College students still find us to be invaluable resources for midterm and final research papers. Those numbers have been steadily increasing. Many students are saying their professors are insisting they talk with an SPJ ethics member for their papers. That's flattering but makes for a busy time in October, December, March and May.

As in previous years, the lion share of calls (approximately 50 percent) are from journalists, with public calls second (about 33 percent) and the college students at the end.

As I always do in this report, I must share my favorite of the last year.

This year's beauty comes from the Vancouver Sun.

The story goes like this:

The Sun reported on a Royal Canadian Mounted Police officer who was part of a sadomasochism group that staged rape-fantasy acts.

This goes off the tracks in a hurry. A psychologist knows about this and puts the reporter in contact with a source that has photos of these events. The reporter meets with the anonymous informant in the dark and is handed a brown envelope with the photos and names of the people involved. The Sun runs the story and justifies using the photos of the Mountie, calling his judgment into account as a public servant. Turns out the photos aren't of him, but someone who resembles him. Whoops.

He sues. Big time.

But, that's legal.

The reporter has repeatedly used the psychologist who made this flawed connection as a source in his story and never reveals to the readers that this whole mess started with him. At no point does anyone outside of the newsroom know that the person who is giving expert advice on the mental state of these actors is closely involved in the backdoor operations that lead to this story. Further, the Sun insists it's not an issue or a conflict. Sadly, this is all unfolding in a Canadian court and the Sun is getting whipped badly, so to speak.

MEDIA INTERVIEWS

Media interview were steady. We had a few incidents, such as the Ukrainian plane disaster, that prompted specific ethics interviews, but for the most part it was a steady stream of issues like anonymous sources, conflicts of interest and plagiarism.

We spoke out more than once about the penchant of cable networks employing campaign operatives as their news sources without revealing their obvious connections to the candidates. In some cases, large donors or PAC operatives suddenly get elevated to a political contributor without the public ever knowing their intimate connection to the source. In cases involving NBC, CNN, CBS and the Wall Street Journal, each refused to share connections with their audiences about the commentators' relationships to the person being reported on. This isn't new, but rather seems to be gaining in frequency. SPJ spoke out years ago on this issue, at the time complaining that military experts used by networks had clear conflicts with the stories they were commenting on.

Interviews this year included: *Editor and Publisher, Columbia Journalism Review, Media Matters, Washington Post, Slate, The Inanity of Sanity, The Wire, BBC, National Press Club podcast, SPJ BlogTalk Radio, Star Radio (Sierra Leone) and worldwide Catholic network, Radio Maria.*

PRESENTATIONS/TRAINING

Members of the committee were actively involved in a number of training presentations over the past year, but perhaps the crowning jewel for SPJ's exposure was the weeklong trip to Sierra Leone to train journalists in media ethics, libel, organizational management and newsroom mentorships.

At the request of the U.S. Department of State I was extended an invitation to travel to the African nation as a guest of the U.S. Embassy. To do this I was awarded an International Scholar's Grant that paid for all my expenses.

The stated purpose of the trip was to celebrate World Press Freedom Day (month). But, the intention was for me to assist the Sierra Leone Association of Journalists with developing a more comprehensive code of ethics and to empower them to fight against a criminal libel law that was putting journalists in jail for minor infractions.

As a guest of the U.S. Embassy I traveled to two cities and held a series of lectures, workshops and luncheons with journalists, government officials and college students. (See attached press release and agenda.)

Much of the details are included in the press release and the agenda. I spoke with college students about ethics, talked to high-ranking government officials about ethics and the repeal of a criminal libel provision in the sedition act, a holdover from the British rule that ended about 35 years ago.

I used a lot of SPJ resources during this trip and provided them with guidance on how to increase and maintain membership in SLAJ, how to develop mentoring programs between older journalists and newest ones, many of whom didn't attend college. I worked SPJ materials into their hands to help them develop better event programming and, while I was there, we used SPJ's current ethics code and the second draft of the newly revised code to redevelop the SLAJ code. I'm happy to say that in July SLAJ members voted unanimously to accept the code revisions that look suspiciously like SPJ.

I handed out six copies of our ethics books, donating two to the college and SLAJ, and giving the presidents of the Independent Media Council and Sierra Leone Editors Guild each one.

The project had mixed success. While they made strong improvements on their ethics code, they are still struggling to overcome the government's resistance to repealing this oppressive criminal libel law. (See my blogs on Code Words and on SPJ's Facebook page from May.) While there we developed a three-prong approach to break the logjam in the Parliament over this. One component is to bring the public into the battle. While journalists are the prime targets of the libel law, it openly applies to citizens as well. Not only can a journalist be jailed for calling the president a rat, but a citizen can get the same treatment for reading those words and repeating them, the sedition and treason ideals of the law. An effort to move this from a media battle to one for the public is taking place and should put additional pressure on legislators to reconsider the value of killing this law.

Additionally, this year, we spoke/trained at these events:

SPJ Region 1 Conference (Boston) – Social media ethics

SPJ Region 2 Conference (Washington, DC) – Ethics code revisions

SPJ Region 4 Conference (Columbus) – Ethics code revisions/Ethics of covering national security issues.

SPJ Region 5 Conference (Chicago) – Ethics code revisions

SPJ Region 9 Conference (Salt Lake City) – Ethics code revisions

SPJ Region 11 Conference (Honolulu) – Ethics code revisions

SPJ Region 12 Conference – (Fayetteville) – Ethics code revisions

Penn Law School Ethics Forum (Philadelphia) – The ethics of reporting on national security issues.

Kiplinger Fellowship Week (Columbus) – Social media ethics

American Agricultural Editors Association (Indianapolis) – Native advertising and editorial content.

This Week Community News (Columbus) – SPJ ethics code revisions
Georgetown University (Washington, DC) – Social media ethics/Code revisions
Ohio State University (Columbus) – Ethics code revisions

OTHER

- We posted 10 blogs to Code Words in 2013-14, our largest body of work to date.
- We published six ethics columns in Quill.
- We logged 106 separate discussions online involving nearly 500 separate comments on the ethics code revisions in our meeting room (an average of more than two discussions each week since the first was initiated on Sept. 23, 2013.) This does not count the 10 hours we spent in Columbus working in person.
- We logged easily more than 500 comments on the ethics code from members and outsiders in the past year. These came via emails, phone calls, the SPJ-created online survey and though noted personal discussions at regional conferences and chapter meetings.

ETHICS COMMITTEE ROSTER

1. Kevin Z. Smith, chairman, Kiplinger Program, Ohio State U., deputy director
2. Fred Brown, vice-chairman, Denver Post, retired columnist
3. Irwin Gratz, Maine Public Radio, producer
4. Hagit Limor, U of Cincinnati, assistant professor
5. Paul Fletcher, Virginia Lawyers Weekly, editor-publisher
6. Dr. Michael Farrell, U Kentucky, associate professor
7. Elizabeth Donald, News-Democrat, southwest Missouri, reporter
8. Andrew Seaman, Reuters, New York, medical reporter
9. Lauren Bartlett, California Edison, PR specialist

CODE REVISION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

1. Kelly McBride, Poynter Institute, senior faculty member, ethicist
2. Tom Kent, AP, managing editor of standards
3. Dr. Chris Roberts, U of Alabama, assistant professor
4. Carole Feldman, AP, deputy Managing Editor
5. Monica Guzman, social media expert, Seattle Times contributor
6. Lynn Walsh, Scripps Howard, national digital producer
7. Dr. Stephen Ward, University of Oregon, retired professor, ethicist



Embassy of the United States of America

Public Affairs Office

PRESS RELEASE

Freetown

May 12, 2013

Contact: Boa Lee

Tel: 076 515 000

U.S. Embassy to Host Talks on Role of the Press in a Democracy

FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE – From Monday, May 19 to Friday, May 23, the U.S. Embassy will be hosting Kevin Smith, a U.S. specialist in reporter protection shield laws, digital media transformation, media leadership, government transparency, and international outreach.

During his five-day visit, Smith will work primarily with the Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ) to strengthen the organization's internal capacity and strategic objectives. He will also meet with media stakeholders including representatives from the Government of Sierra Leone, civil society organizations, Guild of Editors, and the Independent Media Commission to discuss the role of the press in a democracy as well as the future of journalism around the world. Smith's visit also includes a private movie screening and discussion with final year mass communication students at Fourah Bay College. A keynote address and panel discussion on the relationship between press, government, and the public is scheduled for Tuesday, May 20 at the British Council Hall.

Smith's visit is part of the U.S. Embassy's continued commitment to strengthen democracy and good governance through a vibrant and independent press. During his most recent visit to Africa earlier this month, Secretary of State John Kerry said, "A free and unfettered press is fundamental to any functioning democracy. That's true in the United States, and it's true across Africa."

Embassy Public Affairs Officer Boa Lee added that Smith's visit builds on the Embassy's previous work with journalists in Sierra Leone. In 2012, the Embassy hosted an investigative reporting training that benefited 18 journalists. It also gave more than \$13,000 last year to SLAJ and Journalists for Human Rights to conduct capacity training exercises and has sent about 10 local reporters to the U.S. in the previous three years to network, engage in mutual learning and cultural exchange, and conduct interviews.

"The United States continuously works to advance media freedom around the world through bilateral engagement, public diplomacy, programming, and multilateral diplomacy," Lee said. "The Embassy has a strong relationship with the Sierra Leone media and we are excited about this program's potential to help chart the way forward for ensuring that the local press can continue to play an important role in Sierra Leone's development."

Smith is the deputy director of the Kiplinger Program in Public Affairs Journalism at Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio. He served as president of the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) for two years and has served on the association's national Ethics Committee for 23 years, and as its chair for six years. Smith has lectured on ethics and press rights around the world and has over 20 years of journalism experience.

For more information and updates about this program, follow the U.S. Embassy's Facebook page: <http://goo.gl/UIIYE8>

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 4, 2014
FROM: Michael Fitzgerald, Freelance Committee Chairman
SUBJ: Freelance Committee report
FOR: SPJ Board of Directors

The SPJ Freelance Community has arrived, after many months of effort and discussion. Shifting to a Community was the main goal of the Freelance Committee since September 2013. The Community was approved in April 2014 by the SPJ Board and launched just before July 4th.

OUR COMMUNITY

Our community leadership remains that of the Freelance Committee until we hold new elections. Formally it consists of chair Michael Fitzgerald, vice chair Anna Pratt, Hazel Becker, Crai Bower, Carol Cole-Frowe, Dana Neuts, Stephanie Overman, and Ruth E. Thaler-Carter.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Developing the community has been our primary focus. Community members have worked on providing an HTML version of the Freelance Resource Guide, which remains in process. Much work remains to be done in terms of promoting the community. It has been not been used much by SPJ members. The hoped-for emergence of communities within the community that represent the diverse interests of SPJ freelance members has not happened in the two months since the site launched.

In the meantime, the development of the Community has caused a drop in some of the Freelance Committee’s traditional functions, notably the Independent Journalist blog. The Community has not led to new infusions of enthusiasm for outreach and communications. We have organized two sessions for the EIJ 2014 conference, and as chair Michael Fitzgerald continues to answer questions about freelancing from SPJ members. Some culling of inactive freelancers from the freelance directory was also engaged in, at the request of one of the Pro Chapters. The @spjfreelance Twitter feed has not been updated since August, in part because of travels by the one person who was updating it.

WHAT’S NEXT?

The Freelance Community has been live for just under two months. It has not experienced a ‘build it and they will come’ event. This was partly by design – we did a soft launch just before a major summer holiday, in part to make sure any major errors were seen by only a small group of people. We have not yet promoted the site or worked with SPJ staff to get the word out. This needs to happen. It may also be that leadership of the Freelance Community needs to be replaced by people with a more natural inclination towards promotion and marketing. A caveat here is that we thought those people would become obvious

because they would use the site aggressively. Such self-identifying new leaders have not emerged.

SUMMARY

The Freelance Community has launched and is poised for growth. But we will need to dedicate effort and energy to marketing it and promoting it. We may need to aggressively recruit new people into the leadership of this effort. The Community will also need continued technical support as it develops.



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MEMORANDUM

DATE: Sept. 4, 2014
FROM: Claudia Amezcua, Generation J Committee Chairwoman
SUBJ: Generation J Committee Report
FOR: SPJ Board of Directors

Since taking over as committee chair back in February, the Generation J committee has been in a transitional period. Victoria Reitano stepped down as Co-chair and many of the committee members have lagged in participation. Through this period of changed, I along with a few other committee members took the opportunity to attend SPJ Scripps to familiarize ourselves with the inner workings of SPJ and learned how to become better leaders.

This is what the GenJ Committee plans to accomplish in the upcoming year:

COLLEGIATE OUTREACH

Recently, while attending SPJ Scripps Jennifer Nicole Sullivan and I noticed that most college chapters have no idea what GenJ is or why it exists. In an effort to help get our committee's presence known Jennifer suggested we team up with a professor or chapter advisor to serve as a liaison between our committee and student journalists.

BRANDING

Our committee has been mostly associated with reaching out to the younger members and serving as liaison with HQ. I feel that we have so much to offer in job seeking, branding, etc that we should think about expanding our reach a broader audience.

The first thing that came to mind for me was the following statement:

"Where is journalism going and what do I need to know?"

It's something that has been sitting in the back of my mind as both young and seasoned journalists try to find their way in or back into the rapidly evolving world of journalism. Everyone on the committee offers a unique inside look into each different medium, why not help those who are passionate about staying current in the industry?

USING YOUTUBE TO ENGAGE MEMBERS:

We plan to produce short videos asking basic questions such as: "Why am I reporter?" in order to strike a conversation with our members. Members can answer with their own videos or even pose their own questions. Our goal is to have an ongoing conversation that allows members to become active within SPJ and get a better understanding on what SPJ can do for them and ultimately what

they can do for SPJ. Our members should feel a strong fraternal connection to the organization, it should be our job to make them feel welcomed.

CO-CHAIR

After careful consideration I have nominated Jennifer Nicole Sullivan as my new Co-Chair. Jennifer has served on the committee for over three years and has proven the same commitment and passion to move the committee back to the thriving force it once was.

Our accomplishment for this year is working together to produce the best panel at Excellence in Journalism 2014 and also remembering why we are SPJ members.

Committee members:

Jennifee Sullivan (Co-Chair pending approval)

Mike Brennan

Rob McLean

Andrew Seaman

Jackie Ingles

Lynn Walsh

Victoria Reitano

Rob Moran

Cassidy Herington

Patrick Kean



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MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 10, 2014
FROM: Becky Tallent, Journalism Education Committee Chairwoman
SUBJ: Journalism Education Committee report
FOR: SPJ Board of Directors

The SPJ Education Committee has been very active this year with the conclusion of the study of high school journalism. The three-year project included a nationwide survey of high school journalism teachers and is resulting in a book to be published by New Forums Press as well as a .pdf report to SPJ leaders. In brief, the survey found:

Training of Teachers: The survey found 120 of the 256 respondents who answered the question (46 percent) said they have media experience, although many said their experience was with college media. Most high school journalism teachers said they took 1-3 journalism classes in college and the same number said they took 10 or more classes; but more distressing was the 24 percent (62) who said the question was “not applicable.”

Another distressing issue arose as we concluded the work: many colleges and universities are abandoning classes concerning how to teach high school journalism. Even the University of Missouri has abandoned their online program despite getting the state to agree to a pretty hefty requirement to teach journalism. At present, only Kent State, Ball State, Kansas State, Michigan State, University of Iowa have known active programs.

Approval of Student Work: When it comes to final approval of student work, school administrators have the final say for 32 percent of student-created newspaper work; 24.5 percent for school magazines, 15 percent for TV stations and 16 percent for yearbooks. In practice, 23 percent of administrators always check the work prior to newspaper publication (17.9 percent sometimes); 12 percent of school administrators always check yearbook (18 percent sometimes); and 33 percent of administrators always check magazines. Student TV advisors were not asked the same question, but in another question they noted 39 percent of administrators place limitations on what can be aired on student-run television.

Most Programs Seem Safe: The good news is most respondents (176 or 68 percent) said they do not fear their program being eliminated. The 82 respondents who said they do fear program closure said it was due to lack of student interest, an emphasis on the common core, a belief that journalism is dying and no longer relevant, and lack of funding.

Disconcerting News: For professional SPJ members, one of the more disconcerting answers came from the question: “What contributions to your student media are made by working professionals?” Of the 243 responses, 53 percent said local professionals provide no contributions at all. The majority of teachers said the thing most

professionals do for their classes is guest speaking (53 percent of those saying they receive help), followed by workshop sessions and internships (19 percent and 18 percent, respectively). Colleges and universities do not fare any better: 56.1 percent said they receive no contributions; of those receiving assistance, 34 percent said they receive workshop assistance and 24.8 percent said colleges and universities will provide guest speakers. This is an area where SPJ can encourage improvement by both pros and colleges and universities.

Other information is available in the study.

The book – which includes the study and chapters on high school journalism law, best programs, how to teach high school journalism in the 21st century, workshops, working with professionals, the importance of the JEA 4-Cs (communication, critical thinking, collaboration and creativity) and how journalism teaches critical thinking beyond the news room – will be published in late 2014 or early 2015. The chapters were written by committee members and edited by Kym Fox, Butler Cain, Mac McKerral and myself.

In addition to completing this massive three-year project, the committee members also wrote Toolbox columns for every Quill in the past year and submitted ideas for breakout sessions at EIJ.

The committee also maintained a regular schedule of meeting via teleconference quarterly.



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MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 14, 2014
FROM: Hagit Limor, Legal Defense Fund Committee Chairwoman
SUBJ: Legal Defense Fund Committee report
FOR: SPJ Board of Directors

The LDF Committee awarded the new maximum \$5,000 three times in the first year since the SPJ Board approved this new committee cap, and sent to the full board a request for an additional amount (another \$5,000) for a group previously awarded by the committee. We also joined seven amicus briefs as detailed below. In all we considered more than a dozen requests and fielded additional questions, while cleaning up our presence online.

Below are cases we considered in reverse chronological order for the year.

7/16/14 Open Records on Campus: The committee stood up for two favorite causes: open records and the rights of student journalists. SPJ FOI summer intern David Schick applied as a University of Georgia Grady College of Journalism student seeking budget deficit records that led to layoffs at Georgia Perimeter College. He filed two Open Records Act requests but the university system released only some documents, denying others due to an “open investigation.” He filed suit challenging this claim as well as excessive fees. The case went to trial in April. We awarded \$5,000 for David’s pro bono attorney and are awaiting the judge’s decision.

5/6/14 Anti-SLAPP Statute/Libel Law: The committee spent \$750 to join an amicus brief that would uphold the recognition of the use of hyperlinks as part of a fair report privilege under libel law and would apply state anti-SLAPP statutes in federal court. This suit would counter several recent rulings that denied usage of state law, allowing some libel plaintiffs to circumvent SLAPP statutes by filing in federal court.

5/5/14 FOIA: The committee fought back the government deciding what information is newsworthy after the Prison Legal News requested documents from the Federal Bureau of Prisons. BOP redacted key details citing privacy exemptions, and the judge upheld privacy over public interest because there was no well-publicized scandal involving BOP personnel. We joined the Reporters Committee amicus at no cost, holding that newsworthiness is not a test for whether a document is public.

5/1/14 Libel Law: We joined another Reporters Committee amicus in a case involving Don Scholz, the founding member of the band “Boston.” He sued the Boston Herald for publishing articles in which band-mate Brad Delp’s ex-wife alleged band tension caused Delp to commit suicide. The state trial court ruled these statements to be opinion and dismissed the case but Scholz appealed to the

Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, which has ruled against the Herald on libel matters in the past.

4/7/14 **Open Meetings Law:** We awarded the Greater Charlotte Pro SPJ Chapter \$5,000 to challenge closed door meetings the Charlotte City Council held to incentivize the Carolina Panthers to stay in town. In late 2012 and early 2013 council held closed sessions to approve sales tax increases for stadium renovations. The meetings were held without the public's knowledge and with police posted to keep citizens out, even though the stadium is on public land and the deal involved taxes. Especially egregious, SPJ sued Charlotte city officials in the 1970s under similar circumstances. Ultimately, the judge dismissed the suit in summary judgment but the committee believes the fight to be just and worthy.

4/7/14 **Campus Police Records:** The committee voted to send forward for full board approval a second request from students at Otterbein University suing for campus police records. The university denied requests, saying the school police department is a private entity not subject to the Ohio Public Records Act. We initially awarded the students \$5,000 in January. The court referred the case to mediation, prompting a second request, which the full SPJ board subsequently approved at its April meeting.

1/9/14 - **Privacy/Email Scanning:** We joined the Reporters Committee to oppose an extensive sealing of motions in a class-action suit against Google regarding the scanning of Gmail messages and then targeting ads based on that scanning. Google claims scanning email content is authorized under exceptions to the federal Wiretap Act. Plaintiffs are arguing it violates not only the federal act but also state wiretapping and eavesdropping statutes. The case impacts millions of Gmail users but also could set boundaries for online service providers' use of their customer data. Our involvement targets the sealing of court records. Both sides moved and the judge granted motions to seal vast amounts of information in this case. Our motion argues these to be unsealed as a violation of the First Amendment right of access in a topic of significant import to the public regarding privacy rights and the workings of a giant technology company. Our attorney advised that sealing of information with very little reasoned analysis has long been an issue in tech-related cases.

1/9/14 **SLAPP:** We denied a request from a self-described "activist/blogger, citizen journalist, political satirist" who sought \$5,000 to defend herself in what she claims is a SLAPP suit against her. A husband and wife journalist team sued Nancy Pincus for libel, claiming more than \$2 million in damage for dozens of blog posts and other online comments the couple call "false and defamatory." We found too many questions in the case, and Pincus is representing herself. Our policy is not to pay individuals directly, but rather ensure the funding goes toward legal work.

1/4/14 - **Student Access/Police Reports:** We approved our maximum \$5,000 in a case impacting student access to campus police reports. Students at Otterbein historically got access to campus incident reports from the local police department. But once Otterbein's security force became its own police department in 2011, it began denying access on grounds that a university police department is a private institution, not subject to the Ohio Public Records Act. Students now only can access the log required under the Clery Act, often out of

date or lacking crucial information. The restrictions have limited reporting on the student magazine and website on important stories including sex assaults on campus.

11/12/13 - **Libel/SLAPP Suits:** We joined the Reporters Committee in a libel case brought by University of Virginia professor Michael Mann against the National Review and the Competitive Enterprise Institute. Michael Mann is a climate scientist known for his controversial work on global warming. A July 2012 National Review blog post questioned Mann's research methods and made a colorful, and perhaps unfortunate, analogy to Jerry Sandusky. CEI heavily excerpted the National Review blog post. Mann sued both. They moved to dismiss under the new D.C. anti-SLAPP statute. We approved funds for the sole issue that courts should allow appeals when they deny SLAPP motions as a double check to protect the First Amendment; otherwise, SLAPP suits could be allowed to proceed through trial even if the trial court gets it wrong, which defeats the purpose of a SLAPP statute.

10/25/13 - **Access/Free Speech:** At no cost to us again, we joined the Reporters Committee in *U.S. v. Apel*, pending in the U.S. Supreme Court. Not a typical press case, this issue involved restrictions on access by protestors to a public thoroughfare, in this case in an area outside Vandenberg Air Force Base that had been designated as a forum for speech since 1989. Although the Court is focused on the question of whether the military exerts exclusive control of the area, the underlying First Amendment issue of places to which the public and the media have access is of critical importance to newsgathering. A decision giving the government more discretion to limit First Amendment activities in areas traditionally open to the public even in the face of a statute would, obviously, have a negative impact on the media.

9/12/13 - **Access/Wild horses:** We joined an amicus request from the National Press Photographers Association and the Reporters Committee in *Leigh v. Jewell*, pending in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. The case in a nutshell involved access for reporters to photograph wild horse roundups on land owned by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management. A lower court found a presumption of access was overcome by safety concerns. The amicus brief argues that journalists are perfectly capable of protecting themselves and that the roundups' newsworthiness overcomes any safety concerns. We signed on, saying that keeping the government honest about rights of access, no matter the situation, is important.

Cases we considered or discussed without funding:

2/9/14 We denied a request by Nancy Pincus, a blogger who is representing herself in what she claims is a SLAPP suit by two married journalists about whom she's written, alleging they're under the influence of wealthy council members. Pincus did not include a copy of the complaint against her and did not indicate, with no attorney, how she would spend the \$5,000 she requested.

1/20/13 – We fielded an informational request from an attorney and documentary filmmaker working with the University of Pennsylvania Law School to launch a blog about documentaries and the law who wanted to learn whether documentary filmmakers qualified for our funding and wanted advice on creating an LDF for documentary filmmakers

10/28/13 We discussed the Audrey Hudson case, in which Maryland State Police and Homeland Security's Coast guard service used a search warrant in an unrelated criminal investigation to seize the private reporting files of an award-winning former investigative journalist for The Washington Times. Audrey Hudson had exposed problems in the [Homeland Security Department's Federal Air Marshals Service](#). She says agents took her private notes and government documents that she had obtained under the Freedom of Information Act, including documents chronicling her sources. But the warrant only covered a search for unregistered firearm and a "potato gun" suspected of belonging to her husband.

9/22/13 We were active very early on in the Joe Hosey AOL/Patch case that made national news, at least within the trades. His attorney is doing the case pro bono, but we offered financial support should they wish to apply. Paul took point on this case. A judge held Hosey in contempt for refusing to reveal his sources in a murder case.



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MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 18, 2014
FROM: Dana Neuts, Membership Committee Chairwoman
SUBJ: Membership Committee report
FOR: SPJ Board of Directors

There has not been much activity from the Membership Committee the second half of this SPJ year. Tom Budnik at HQ is continues to make outreach calls, which has been done by volunteers in the past. We believe his work has helped improve retention, but that work must be ongoing to see measurable results. The last quarter the committee did not receive any nominations for SPJ Volunteer of the Month, despite our outreach efforts via SPJ Leads, Twitter and personal "asks." What I thought would be a nice way to honor hard-working volunteers turned out to not be of interest to many members.

As has happened in past years, the Membership Committee has had a difficult time gaining any traction, not from lack of interest by committee members and other volunteers, but because there is no clear focus. Why? Because everything SPJ does relates to membership – programming, training, advocacy, ethics, FOI, etc. It is hard to nail down a goal to say this is what the Membership Committee should be doing or to identify benchmarks we can effectively measure. That doesn't mean we shouldn't keep trying.

For the 2014-2015, with the board's approval, I am appointing Robyn Sekula as Membership Chair. She is an energetic, enthusiastic freelancer and the president of the Louisville Pro chapter. She has successfully grown her chapter through outreach and stellar programming. She will work with the committee to redefine its goals and come up with one or two specific projects that will focus on membership next year. She is already reaching out to new and seasoned SPJ members, including several student members, to join the committee. We are also hoping to improve the committee's diversity to better represent our membership.

In addition, part of my focus as president in the coming year will be to support our new communities so they get off to a successful start. The communities, by their very nature, are designed to connect members with each other in new ways by providing networking opportunities, tools, resources and support. This structure will be particularly helpful where members do not have an affiliation with a local chapter. Because some of the tools we will be using are public (e.g., Google + and Twitter), non-SPJ members will also learn about us. While we can't require those participants to become members of SPJ, we can encourage them to join. If they see what we are doing is valuable, they could become members.

If you look solely at the numbers, membership can always be improved upon. If you look at SPJ's potential to grow membership, or at least slow membership turnover, we have a lot of opportunities to turn things around and better engage our existing members.