

Coachella Valley Journalism Foundation

October 2023

Public support for local journalism has grown substantially during the past few years. As the Coachella Valley Journalism Foundation enters its fourth year, we are grateful for the strong grassroots support we have received toward our goal of sustaining and supporting Valley news organizations. It isn't easy, but it's always been rewarding.

Your support has allowed us to provide financial support to The Desert Sun, KESQ, the Coachella Valley Independent and NBC Palm Springs. We hope to expand our assistance in the future based on your ongoing financial support. The Coachella Valley Journalism Foundation works on behalf of all local media entities based on three priorities:

— Funding full-time positions. We were founded based on the desire to save The Desert Sun's Opinion content by providing money to hire an Editorial Page Editor. Thankfully, we've been able to fulfill that priority for three years. Our goal is to grow the number of journalists who are working locally to keep you informed.

— Investing in future journalists by underwriting internships or fellowships in local newsrooms. This summer, we were able to place three interns on three different news teams. That's up from two internships funded in 2022.

— Providing small grants to offset the cost of reporting efforts, such as travel. This support has allowed newsrooms to pursue stories they might not otherwise have been able to afford.

Both nationally and locally, philanthropy in journalism is growing.

The MacArthur Foundation and Knight Foundation last month announced a new national initiative called Press Forward.

The details of Press Forward are still being developed, and news organizations across the country will be working to solicit funding. CVJF has expressed interest to the Knight Foundation, and we hope to earn their support for building collaborative journalism projects among the different news organizations in our community. Fingers crossed.

Locally, CVJF was thrilled to see the announcement from Desert Sun editor Kate Franco that its fundraising partnership with the Inland Empire Community Foundation has successfully resulted in the restoration of the paper's Desert Scene philanthropic coverage under the leadership of Winston Gieseke. This coverage was eliminated late last year when Winston was laid off due to budget cuts. The Desert Scene section made its return yesterday, and we are thankful for the community's financial support that made it all possible. While CVJF is separate from the IECF journalism fund, we share the same goals, and we support their efforts.

Luckily, CVJF has dramatically grown its donor base over the past three years. So far this year we have received twice as many donations as last year. That's the good news. The bad news? Donations are coming in much smaller amounts. Unfortunately, that means we are behind in our fundraising efforts.

We are a little more than one month out from the National Day of Giving or "Giving Tuesday" on Nov. 28. You'll be hearing from me throughout the month of November as we work to encourage charitable support for CVJF. Giving Tuesday was created as a counterpoint to the commercialism of holiday shopping and to encourage philanthropic support. I can think of no cause more deserving of support than the efforts of local journalists to defend democracy and keep residents informed on important issues playing out in the community.

We have set a goal to raise \$25,000 by the end of the year. I hope you will see the benefit of supporting our cause. Please spread the word to your friends who also believe in strong local news.

As an incentive CVJF board member Joe Wallace has generously donated a top-ranked bottle of champagne. Valued at several hundred dollars, the 1996 Veuve Clicquot Ponsardin La Grande Dame Brut would make a great way to celebrate the new year! And celebrate local news! Between now and the end of the year, anyone who donates \$500 or more to CVJF will be entered into a drawing for this tasty prize.

The important role local journalism plays in the community is clear, and the needs of local newsrooms continue. Your support is essential. Please make a donation to CVJF at www.cvjf.org. Thank you.