



# Programs & Training Opportunities

The Society of Professional Journalists is dedicated to quality, responsible journalism as the foundation of a free and informed society. On individual and industry levels, the Society seeks to Improve & Protect Journalism through a variety of initiatives:

## Programs and Projects

- ▶ **Freedom of Information:** The Society of Professional Journalists leads the media in the areas of Freedom of Information and open records with projects aimed at maximizing access for all journalists. SPJ presents an annual report on FOI in Quill magazine and presents regular reports on FOI topics making news. The Society's legal counsel tracks administrative, legislative, and judicial developments and makes SPJ's voice heard through court filings and petitions on behalf of journalists who have been shut out of hearings, denied access to information, or forced by courts to turn over notes and research.
- ▶ **Legal Defense Fund:** The Legal Defense Fund helps journalists involved in access and shield law cases. Awards from the fund provide journalists with legal or direct financial assistance. The fund is supported through contributions and an ongoing fund-raising campaigns.
- ▶ **Project Sunshine:** SPJ's 50-state, grassroots Sunshine Network identifies threats to public access and government and organizes efforts to resist those threats. The program focuses the attention of all chapters and leaders on Freedom of Information issues at the local, chapter and state levels. Last year, state coordinators prepared a database of state access policies for journalists seeking interviews with prison inmates.
- ▶ **Responsible Journalism:** SPJ works to ensure that journalists perform their work while adhering to the highest standards of behavior and decision-making. The first Code of Ethics was adopted in 1926 and has been updated recently. The code is embraced by thousands of writers, editors, and other news professionals. It instructs journalists to seek truth and report it, minimize harm, act independently, and be accountable. The Society's goal is not to provide all of the answers or settle all of the disputes but to teach journalists how to make clear, defensible decisions. From the code, SPJ has developed important programs including conferences, an awards program, and an issue of Quill magazine focusing on ethics to assist journalists in enhancing their ability to identify ethical issues and dilemmas.
- ▶ **Member Network:** More than 250 chapters nationwide bring educational programming to local areas and offer regular contact with other professionals from print, broadcast, freelance, online journalism and trade publications.
- ▶ **Awards Program:** SPJ promotes excellence in journalism through its Sigma Delta Chi awards for professional journalists in print, broadcast, online and research journalism. The Mark of Excellence awards program honors the outstanding work of student journalists. A \$75,000 Pulliam Editorial Writing Fellowship allows one editorial writer to take a year to study a topic of choice. The Pulliam/Kilgore Freedom of Information Internship program annually offers two students the opportunity to study, research, and write about FOI issues. The program is funded through a grant from SPJ's educational arm, the Sigma Delta Chi Foundation.

**Want to learn more about  
SPJ's many programs or  
training opportunities,  
visit [www.spj.org](http://www.spj.org)**

**Questions?  
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## Training & Workshops

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- ▶ **Newsroom Training Program:** The Society offers a traveling newsroom-training program, which combines high ideals with hands-on application in the convenience of your newsroom.
- ▶ **Narrative Writing Seminars:** SPJ invites early career reporters and front-line editors from small and mid-size daily newspapers to step out of the inverted pyramid and into the art of the storytelling! Through the Narrative Writing Workshops, participants will learn options for reinvigorating the writing craft.
- ▶ **Ted Scripps Leadership Training Institute:** The Ted Scripps Leadership Institute offers participants a mix of sessions focused on interpersonal and organizational leadership skills, as well as sound chapter management practices. The weekend program takes place each summer and is open to members who are current leaders or will be taking on leadership roles in local chapters.
- ▶ **JournalismTraining.org.** JournalismTraining.org is a searchable database with more than 500 training opportunities waiting for you to explore. If you want to travel, you'll find courses all over the country. Or, type in your zip code and find something nearby. If you just can't get away from work or home commitments, check out the Web-based opportunities. Or maybe you need some serious time to recharge, refocus and learn. Check out the fellowships, and see which one is right for you.
- ▶ **FACSNET:** SPJ and the Foundation for American Communication partner to provide educational seminars designed to give journalists the background knowledge they need to better understand and analyze the issues that are so vital to our society. The mission of FACS is to improve the quality of information reaching the public through the news.
- ▶ **National Journalism Conference:** The annual event offers more than 60 educational sessions designed to teach new skills, refine techniques, and reach other professionals with common interests and concerns and is the organization's largest program. Every year, the gathering rotates to a new location where journalists can connect, learn and relax.



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