

Award Winners

2021

-Capitol reporter Jonathan Oosting of Bridge Michigan for his reporting of Michigan's government proved invaluable when the state's election system plunged toward chaos after the November 2020 elections and political extremism tried to go mainstream. In the two months after the election perpetuated persistent falsehoods about voting irregularities, Jonathan was swift and diligent about setting the record straight, writing 63 articles that debunked conspiracy theories from dead people voting, election software glitches, inflated turnout and more. But Jonathan did far more than simply fact-check. His reporting took him to all ends of the state to chronicle the extremism that fueled lies about the election and tell the stories of those brave enough to tell the truth. - <https://www.bridgemi.com/michigan-government/i-am-certainly-not-dead-living-voters-contradict-michigan-gop-fraud-claims>, <https://www.bridgemi.com/michigan-government/trump-fraud-claims-make-michigan-clerks-fact-checkers-lies-spread-online>, <https://www.bridgemi.com/michigan-government/senator-stood-trump-his-career-may-suffer-his-cows-dont-care>, <https://www.bridgemi.com/michigan-government/covid-orders-fuel-extremism-tiny-upper-peninsula-town-some-fear-unrest>, <https://www.bridgemi.com/michigan-government/they-were-capitol-riot-now-these-michigan-republicans-want-your-vote>

2020

-Reporter Michael Wilkinson of Bridge Magazine for his reporting of the Covid-19 pandemic. He was the first reporter in Michigan to spot that Detroit was a national hotspot for the virus and that COVID-19, in the early days of the pandemic, disproportionately sickened and killed African Americans. He came to the latter conclusion before state epidemiologists did. - <https://www.bridgemi.com/michigan-coronavirus-dashboard-vaccines-cases-deaths-and-maps>, <https://www.bridgemi.com/michigan-health-watch/coronavirus-spreading-faster-detroit-nearly-anywhere-united-states>, <https://www.bridgemi.com/michigan-health-watch/black-communities-hit-harder-coronavirus-michigan-not-just-detroit>, <https://www.bridgemi.com/michigan-health-watch/why-did-coronavirus-spread-so-fast-michigan-compared-neighbors>, <https://www.bridgemi.com/talent-education/michigan-districts-make-millions-teaching-home-schoolers-karate-and-crafts>, <https://www.bridgemi.com/michigan-environment-watch/two-heirs-bought-midland-dams-tax-shelter-tragedy-followed>

2019

-Reporters Tresa Baldas of the Detroit Free Press for an in-depth investigation "Resorts in Jamaica are facing a 'historic' sexual assault problem." Her body of work encompassed a 9-month investigation that revealed that Jamaican island officials and the world's largest online vacation website covered up a pattern of abuse. Her work found that at least one American woman a month is raped at Jamaican resorts and exposed the conspiracy and cover up surrounding that fact. - <https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/detroit/2018/10/30/jamaica-resorts-tripadvisor-sexual-assault/1520587002/>, <https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/2018/11/30/jamaica-resort-sexual-assault-sandals/2048055002/>, <https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/2019/01/22/jamaica-orders-audit-resorts-amid-sex-scandal/2572533002/>, <https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/2019/05/15/tripadvisor-sexual-assault-warnings-travel-reviews/1194918001/>, <https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/detroit/2019/05/31/tripadvisor-sexual-misconduct-buried/1274528001/>, <https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/detroit/2019/07/23/state-department-american-tourists-jamaica/1796973001/>

2018

-Reporter Paula Gardner of Mlive Media Group for her series on "PFAS." Gardner was the lead writer in a series of stories about PFAS contamination in Michigan. Her stories illustrated the human impact of this issue as well as its impact on the environment. She showed a breadth of knowledge that allowed her to produce pieces that illustrated how Michigan could take serious steps to address the problem. Her body of work encompasses various issues effecting Michigan. Last spring she produced a richly reported piece on the state's economy. Her work took an in-depth look at a middle-income Michigan couple struggling to make ends meet. - https://www.mlive.com/news/page/michigan_middle_class_struggles.html, https://www.mlive.com/news/2018/09/pfas_michigan_wixom_contaminat.html, https://www.mlive.com/news/2018/04/michigan_beyond_factory_jobs.html, https://www.mlive.com/news/page/michigans_water_crisis_pfas.html, https://www.mlive.com/news/2018/09/astronomical_pfas_contaminatio.html, https://www.mlive.com/news/2018/09/quicker_action_and_less_excuse.html

2017

-Reporter Garrett Ellison of Mlive Media group for his watchdog investigations. Garret's work symbolizes the importance of watchdog journalism. These stories highlight the work reporters can contribute to the public good when they go beyond standard municipal/government coverage. The Nestle story is an example of the kind of important, time-consuming work that requires reporters to look beyond the big city "bubble" for stories no one else is reporting. His coverage of the Enbridge Line 5 story is filled with the kind of information one must mine in the dusty corners of government offices and in the dry departmental reports that often contain between-the-lines revelations. - https://www.mlive.com/news/2017/08/wolverine_pfas_house_st_dump.html, https://www.mlive.com/news/2016/10/nestle_groundwater_pumping_exp.html, https://www.mlive.com/news/2017/06/line_5_unsupported_spans.html, https://www.mlive.com/news/grand-rapids/2017/09/wolverine_hufnagel_pfas_leathe.html, https://www.mlive.com/news/2017/04/nestle_evert_wetlands_impact.html, https://www.mlive.com/news/2016/12/wurtsmith_pfc_hydrant_data.html

2016

-Karen Bouffard & Joel Kurth of the Detroit News for their investigative reporting that revealed decade-long problems of cleaning surgical instruments at one of Michigan's biggest hospital systems, prompting state and federal investigations that could jeopardize the hospitals' federal funding and require massive reforms.

2015

-Curt Guyette of ACLU for his reporting of the Flint Water Story.

2014

-Jennifer Dixon of the Detroit Free Press for her investigative reporting into the lack of transparency on how \$1 billion of taxpayer funds are spent on charter schools in Michigan.