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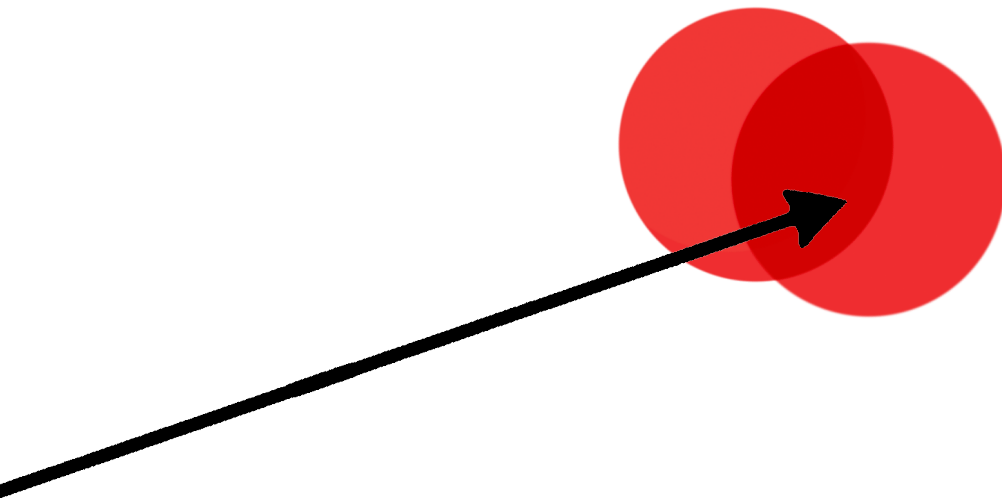


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IMPACT REPORT
 JANUARY-APRIL 2023

Celebrating 15 Years of Publishing



Our Mission

ProPublica exposes abuses of power and betrayals of the public trust by governments, businesses and other institutions, using the moral force of investigative journalism to spur reform through the sustained spotlighting of wrongdoing.

Who We Are

We are an independent, nonprofit news organization that produces investigative journalism with moral force. Our journalists dig deep into important issues, shining a light on abuses of power and betrayals of public trust. Our reporting has contributed to the passage of new laws; reversals of harmful policies and practices; and accountability for leaders at local, state and national levels.

ProPublica was founded in 2008 to address a broad decline in investigative reporting amid the collapse of the business model that had supported American journalism for more than a century. Today, with a team of nearly 150 dedicated journalists — based in New York and working from state and regional offices in the Midwest, South, Southwest and Texas, with a forthcoming unit in the Northwest — ProPublica's staff is the largest in American journalism that's devoted solely to investigative reporting.

How We Work

As a nonprofit, ProPublica's work is powered primarily through donations. The vast bulk of the money we spend goes directly into world-class, [award-winning journalism](#). We are committed to uncovering the truth, no matter how long it takes or how much it costs, and we practice [transparent financial reporting](#) so donors know how their dollars are spent.

ProPublica regularly collaborates with other news organizations to report and publish our journalism, extending the reach of each story and maximizing impact.

Our [Local Reporting Network](#) gives local newsrooms, which have been particularly hard hit by the decline in local journalism, the opportunity to tackle big, yearlong investigative stories that are crucial to their communities. Selected reporters work in and report to their home newsrooms while receiving extensive support and guidance from ProPublica.

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Cover: Our reporting on the financial ties between Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas and billionaire Republican megadonor Harlan Crow ignited a national debate about the ethics of the court. Collage by Lisa Larson-Walker/ProPublica
This page: Dr. Ashanda Saint Jean, chair of the obstetrics and gynecology department at HealthAlliance Hospitals of the Hudson Valley in New York. Natalie Keyssar, special to ProPublica



Journalism that Sparks Widespread Change

As we look back at the first months of 2023, we're struck by the varied kinds of change spurred by ProPublica's journalism. Our reporting has led to new laws, prompted government investigations and altered policies in local communities and on the national stage. We're proud to share more details in this report.

Some of our most recent reporting has prompted lawmakers to focus on the Supreme Court. A [series of investigative stories](#) about the financial ties between Justice Clarence Thomas and billionaire Republican megadonor Harlan Crow ignited a national debate about the ethics of the court. The revelations prompted some Senators to call for stricter ethics rules at a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing held in May.

A few recent highlights of our journalism's impact:

■ Nearly 18 months after ProPublica's [Sacrifice Zones](#) series found that an estimated 74 million Americans — disproportionately people of color — were exposed to elevated cancer risk due to being exposed to toxic industrial emissions, the EPA proposed [a series of major reforms](#), including tougher air pollution rules for chemical plants and other industrial facilities.

■ In November, ProPublica and The New Yorker [published an exposé of hospice fraud](#), revealing how the business transformed from a holistic, empathetic model of end-of-life care to a \$22 billion dollar industry rife with exploitation and abuse. Three months later, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services [overhauled how it inspects hospice providers](#).

■ [The Repatriation Project](#) revealed that the remains and sacred belongings of more than 100,000 Native Americans are still held in institutions across the U.S., three decades after Congress required them to be returned to tribes. Since the publication of the project in January, more than a dozen U.S. schools and museums have [pledged to redouble their efforts](#) to

return the remains, and a committee of senators are [pressing the institutions with the largest collections](#) to expedite repatriation.

We are also excited to announce a further expansion of our efforts to serve local and regional audiences with the opening of a new hub in the Northwest. We'll be hiring a team of investigative journalists focused on Washington, Oregon, Alaska and Idaho. This will be the fifth in our growing network of regional investigative hubs, which build on our existing relationships and prior collaborations in the region. For example, in April, following [our investigation with The Seattle Times](#) into allegations of abuse in Washington's largest network of private special education schools, lawmakers [voted nearly unanimously](#) to strengthen oversight of the system.

As we embark on our 15th year of publishing, we thank our readers and donors for supporting the power of investigative journalism to create change.



Robin Sparkman

Robin Sparkman,
President



Stephen Engelberg

Stephen Engelberg,
Editor-in-Chief

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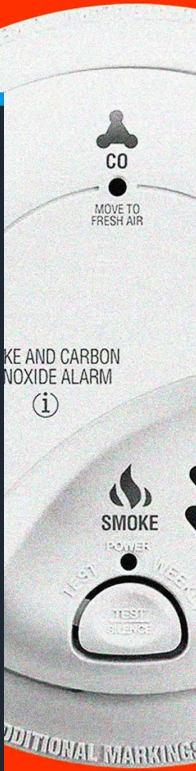


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Impact

The most important measure of our work is whether it has impact. We measure impact not in terms of audience size or honors but in real-world change. Our journalism in the first few months of 2023 spurred change in a number of important areas.

Lisa Larson-Walker/ProPublica. Source images: Olivier Douliery/AFP/Getty Images, Chris Goodney/Bloomberg via Getty Images.





Government

Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse, D-R.I., a member of the chamber's Judiciary Committee, displays a copy of a painting featuring Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas alongside conservative political operatives during an ethics reform hearing in May. The painting was commissioned by billionaire Texas Republican real estate developer Harlan Crow, who, according to a ProPublica investigation, invited Thomas on many luxury vacations over a number of years. Chip Somodevilla/Getty Images

Lawmakers Call for Clarence Thomas Investigation and Ethics Reform

In April, ProPublica published a [bombshell story](#) revealing that Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas had secretly accepted luxury trips from billionaire and Republican megadonor Harlan Crow for over two decades. None of these trips appeared on Thomas' financial disclosures. Neither did the \$133,363 that we reported Crow paid to [purchase properties](#) in Savannah, Georgia, including Thomas' mother's home, which was owned by Thomas and his family. The payment marked the first known instance of money flowing from the Republican megadonor to the Supreme Court justice. Thomas' disclosures also failed to include the private school tuition we discovered that [Crow paid for Thomas' grandnephew](#). In response to our initial report, Thomas acknowledged the trips and defended his failure to disclose them, citing

guidance from colleagues and others in the judiciary. Crow has issued statements about his relationship with Thomas, which we've included in our stories. He acknowledged that he'd extended "hospitality" to the Thomases, but he said that Thomas never asked for any of it and it was "no different from the hospitality we have extended to our many other dear friends."

However, lawmaker reaction has been swift, including a [recent Senate Judiciary Committee hearing](#), demands that Chief Justice John Roberts investigate the trips and [calls for ethics reform](#). The nonpartisan ethics watchdog Campaign Legal Center is also [calling on the Department of Justice](#) to investigate.



Top: An artist's rendering of a 2012 meeting in a hotel room in Ghana between an international arms broker and his buyers. "I will make you a consul in your country," Faouzi Jaber promised during the secret meeting at the Golden Tulip hotel. Bottom right: A portrait of Mohammad Ibrahim Bazzi. Illustrations by Matt Rota for ProPublica and ICIJ

Nations Crack Down on "Shadow Diplomat" System

Countries around the globe are launching investigations into or proposing reforms to the unregulated honorary consul system after an [investigation](#) by ProPublica, the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists and more than 50 international media organizations. Thousands of these volunteer diplomats are in place worldwide, working from their home countries to represent the interests of the foreign nations that appoint them. In exchange, consuls receive legal protections and privileges, including diplomatic credentials, special license plates and the ability to move consular bags across borders without inspection. Our investigation revealed at least 500 current or former consuls accused of crimes or some kind of wrongdoing. In January, Jordan, Latvia and Israel became the latest countries to either [terminate](#) or [review](#) their honorary consul appointments. And

in February, Mohammad Ibrahim Bazzi, a former Lebanese diplomat appointed by the Gambian government, was [indicted on money laundering and terrorism charges](#) for allegedly funding the terrorist group Hezbollah, according to the Department of Justice. He pleaded not guilty in April.





Healthcare

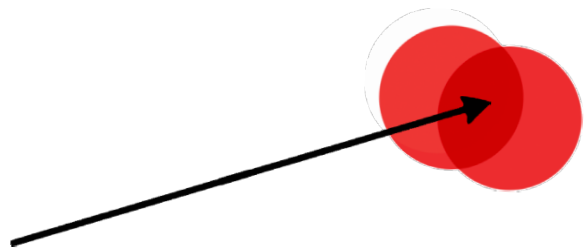
After Amanda Duffy's daughter was stillborn in 2014, she decided to turn her grief into action. Jenn Ackerman, special to ProPublica

Lawmakers Call for Action on Stillbirths

Lawmakers are demanding action following a year-long ProPublica investigation that revealed the failures of federal agencies and health care providers to reduce the country's stillbirth rate. No federal agency has launched a national campaign to reduce the risk of stillbirth or adequately raise awareness about it. Sen. Jeff Merkley, a Democrat from Oregon, and others have called for additional funding for stillbirth research, data and prevention. Our reporting found that among wealthy countries, the U.S. ranks as one of the worst in reducing its stillbirth rate and that according to experts, one in four stillbirths may be preventable. Our investigation also revealed stark racial disparities, with Black women more than twice as likely — and in some states around three times as likely — as white women to suffer a stillbirth. In May, this project was named a Pulitzer Prize finalist in the explanatory reporting category.

Regulators Overhaul Inspections of Hospice Providers

Three months after ProPublica and the New Yorker published an exposé of hospice fraud in November 2022, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services announced significant reforms to how it inspects hospice providers, effective immediately. The investigation revealed how hospice has transformed into a \$22 billion dollar industry plagued by exploitation and alarming business practices and sparked immediate demands for reform not just from Congress but from the industry's leading trade associations.



Illinois Agency Relocates Patients at Mental Health Center, More Calls for Accountability

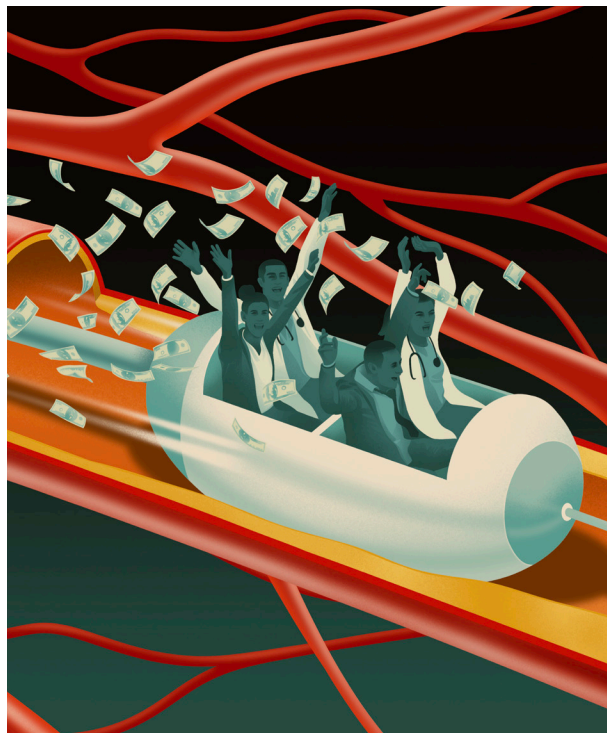
The Illinois Department of Human Services will relocate about half of the patients at a state-run mental health center in rural southern Illinois following our reporting into a culture of abuse, cover-ups and poor patient care. Our series, published with Local Reporting Network partner Lee Enterprises Midwest along with Capitol News Illinois, sparked outrage and calls for hearings by Illinois lawmakers. The watchdog for the Illinois Department of Human Services announced he is seeking harsher penalties against health care workers who obstruct abuse and neglect investigations.

Utah to Fix Law that Made It Hard for Some Sexual Assault Survivors to Sue

In March, the Utah Legislature passed a bill that reformed medical malpractice law to exclude sexual assault. The bill's passage follows an investigation by ProPublica and Local Reporting Network partner The Salt Lake Tribune that detailed how survivors who alleged they had been sexually abused by a health care worker were treated more harshly in Utah's civil courts than those who alleged that assault took place in other settings.

Kansas Senators Demand Answers About Use of Medical Devices at VA Hospital

Just hours after ProPublica, in collaboration with The Wichita Eagle, revealed serious allegations of illegal kickbacks and alleged patient harm at a veterans hospital in Kansas, the state's U.S. senators and a U.S. representative demanded answers and accountability from the Department of Veterans Affairs. According to a whistleblower lawsuit, between 2011 and 2018 representatives from Medtronic, the world's largest medical device maker, treated health care workers to steakhouse dinners, Apple electronics and NASCAR tickets. In turn, the company secured a lucrative contract with the veterans hospital. Representatives also allegedly "groomed and trained" doctors at the hospital, who then deployed the company's devices in artery procedures, even in cases when it was not medically necessary. Medtronic declined to respond to ProPublica's questions, citing the ongoing litigation. "These allegations are false and Medtronic is defending against these claims in court," said Boua Xiong, a spokesperson for the company.



Top: Some of the 94 women, top, who sued Utah OB-GYN Dr. David Broadbent for sexual assault. Leah Hogsten/The Salt Lake Tribune
Bottom: Nash Weerasekera, special to ProPublica



Environment

Top: The OxyChem plant in Niagara Falls, New York. Rich-Joseph Facun, special to ProPublica
Right: Front page from a bill introduced to ban the use of asbestos in the United States.

Lawmakers and EPA Move to Ban Asbestos

Following a ProPublica and NPR [investigation into hazardous working conditions](#) at a chlorine plant where workers were regularly exposed to asbestos, lawmakers have [reintroduced a bill](#) to ban the use of asbestos in the United States. If passed, the U.S. would join dozens of countries that have outlawed the carcinogenic substance. The EPA, meanwhile, is working on its own ban. In March, the EPA invited the public to weigh in on new information the agency received about the proposed ban, including ProPublica’s reports about workplace safety. In a dramatic turnaround, Olin Corporation, one of the few U.S. manufacturers still using asbestos, has signaled [newfound support](#) if given two years to phase out the application of any new asbestos materials, with an additional five years to phase out asbestos materials already in use.

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. _____

To amend the Toxic Substances Control Act to prohibit the manufacture, processing, use, and distribution in commerce of commercial asbestos and mixtures and articles containing commercial asbestos, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. MERKLEY introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To amend the Toxic Substances Control Act to prohibit the manufacture, processing, use, and distribution in commerce of commercial asbestos and mixtures and articles containing commercial asbestos, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*
3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**
4 This Act may be cited as the “Alan Reinstein Ban
5 Asbestos Now Act of 2023”.

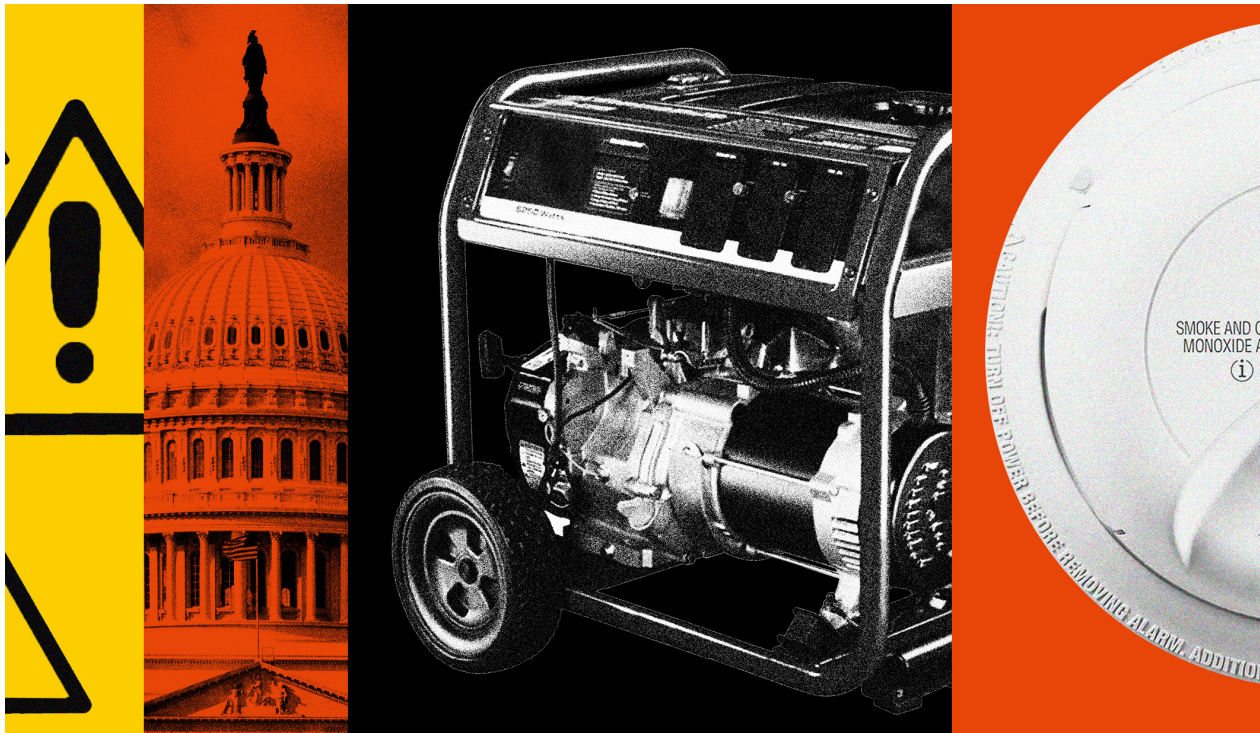


Photo illustration by NBC News

EPA Announces Major Air Pollution Reforms

Our groundbreaking [Sacrifice Zones](#) — an investigative series that mapped toxic air pollutants across the country — continues to spur major impact. The series revealed that, largely in areas populated by people of color, residents are being exposed to toxic industrial emissions linked to an increased risk of cancer. Within weeks, the investigation spurred impact, including [additional air monitoring](#), two state [cancer studies](#) and the [Environmental Protection Agency's rejection](#) of a less stringent health standard for ethylene oxide — all with the potential to benefit millions across the U.S. Weeks after we published our series, EPA Administrator Michael Regan said the agency would conduct several unannounced EPA inspections of major polluters. And in April, the EPA [proposed a series of extensive reforms](#) to slash air pollution at chemical plants and facilities that sterilize medical equipment. This followed our reporting, which estimated that 74 million Americans were exposed to elevated cancer risk from these businesses. Under these new reforms, the number of residents near these facilities exposed to unacceptable cancer risk ultimately would drop by 96%, according to the EPA.

Federal Agency Advances Portable Generator Safety Rule

The Consumer Product Safety Commission has proposed [sweeping new regulations](#) to make portable generators safer, citing the increasing number of deaths they cause and the failure of manufacturers to protect consumers. The regulations would require generators to emit less carbon monoxide and shut off automatically when the deadly gas reaches a certain level. The federal agency's proposal comes in the wake of [an investigation](#) by ProPublica, The Texas Tribune and NBC News that revealed the lack of safeguards underpinning the worst carbon monoxide poisoning event in U.S. history. During a historic 2021 winter storm in Texas, at least 19 residents died from carbon monoxide poisoning, with at least 10 of those deaths involving generators.

READER FEEDBACK

"Please keep up the important work you do; it is greatly appreciated and plays an important part in keeping our Democracy whole."

—Leonard in New Hampshire



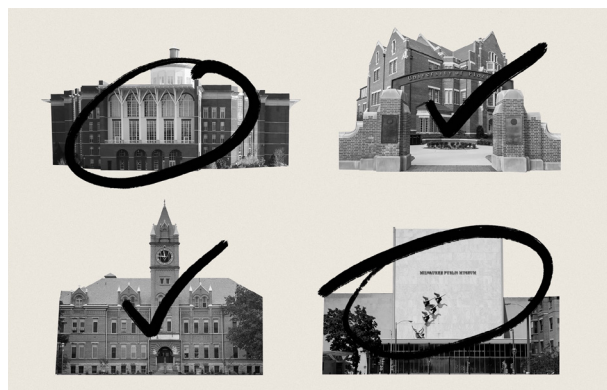
Racial Justice

Top: Logan Pappenfort, top, a member of the Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma and interim director at the Dickson Mounds Museum, is part of a group of people who have started to confront the history of the museum, including its lack of repatriations. Sky Hopinka for ProPublica
Bottom right: Collage by Alex Bandoni/ProPublica

Museums and Universities Pledge to Return Native American Remains

Following ProPublica’s publication of [The Repatriation Project](#) in January, more than a dozen U.S. schools and museums [pledged to redouble their efforts](#) to return human remains and belongings taken from Native American gravesites, well after the 1990 Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act called for them to be returned to tribes. Our series investigating the failures of the 1990 law found that remains of more than 100,000 Native Americans are [being held by prominent institutions](#) across the U.S. In April, a U.S. Senate committee [sent letters](#) to the five institutions identified as having the largest collections of Indigenous remains, [demanding an explanation](#) for why they’ve failed to return them to tribes as required by federal law. In addition, a sweeping repatriation reform bill [unanimously passed](#) the

Illinois House of Representatives in March; if signed into law, it would create a protected cemetery for the reburial of repatriated Native American ancestors and establish a committee of tribal leaders to review state projects that may disturb culturally significant sites.





Collage by ProPublica. Source Images: Akasha Rabut, special to ProPublica; Gulf South Research Corporation.

Federal Agency Rejects Plans for Project That Could Harm Black Heritage Sites

For the second time in six months, the Army Corps of Engineers reprimanded a Louisiana developer for its failure to offer an adequate assessment of the harm that its proposed \$400 million development would cause to neighboring Black communities and historic sites. Months earlier, ProPublica revealed a whistleblower had raised alarms about the project after the company changed the findings of a report she submitted that concluded that the development would disrupt important historic sites, including possibly unmarked graves of enslaved people.

READER FEEDBACK

“You bring to light issues that can have an impact on everyday life for us Average Joes (and Janes) who wouldn’t have a clue otherwise. Thank you to your outstanding journalists for their dedicated sleuthing and due diligence.”

—Doug in Michigan



Criminal Justice

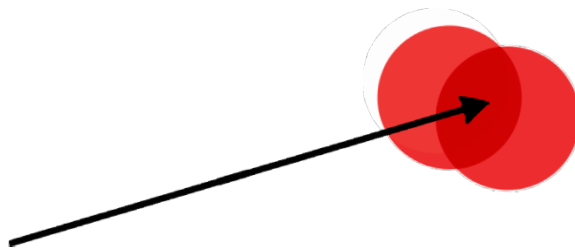
Illustration by Matt Rota, special to ProPublica

Prosecutors and Judges Push for Ban of 911 Call Analysis

Following [our investigation](#) into the way that 911 call analysis, a new form of junk science, has infiltrated the justice system, prosecutors, judges and defense attorneys nationwide are [calling to ban](#) the use of the technique, review past convictions in which it was used and sanction prosecutors who snuck it into court despite knowing it was inadmissible. Shortly after our story was published, the Supreme Court of Illinois agreed to take another look at the case of [Jessica Logan](#). Logan was convicted of killing her baby after a detective testified about his analysis of her 911 call to report her baby was not breathing.

Another Police Officer Pleads Guilty in Indiana Investigation

Our [2018 investigation](#) into the criminal justice system in Elkhart, Indiana, published with the Local Reporting Network partner South Bend Tribune, exposed [wrongful convictions](#), [questionable convictions](#), [dubious investigative practices](#) and a [lack of police accountability](#) and continues to see impact. Our reporting [exposed the 2018 beating](#) by two Elkhart police officers of a man handcuffed to a chair. One of the two officers [pleaded guilty](#) to a federal civil rights charge in September and was sentenced to 15 months in prison. In March, the second officer [pleaded guilty](#) and is scheduled to be sentenced in July.



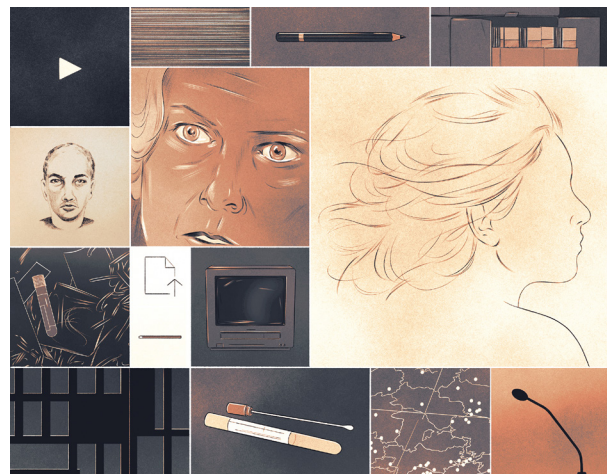


Left: Photo illustration by ProPublica. Photo of Maryland Attorney General Anthony Brown by Robb Hill for The Washington Post via Getty Images. Background illustration by Isabel Seliger, special to ProPublica. Bottom: Illustrations by Isabel Seliger, special to ProPublica



Maryland AG Moves to Protect DNA Samples

In Maryland, the state's attorney general and lawmakers are acting to protect a trove of samples that could help solve hundreds of cold cases. This development comes two years after we showcased the remarkable tale of a doctor who saved physical evidence from more than 2,000 rape exams starting in the 1970s, years before police began to preserve forensic DNA. Decades later, the evidence helped police close more than 80 cold cases, prompting dozens of arrests and exposing serial rapists. The evidence also led to the exoneration of an innocent man. Another 1,800 samples remain untested.





Education

Joe Nepras, left, accompanied his son Nathan, 16, to a hearing after the student got a ticket related to a fight on a school bus. Armando L. Sanchez/Chicago Tribune

Illinois Lawmakers Address Disproportionate School Discipline Policies

Following our [investigative series](#) with the Chicago Tribune that revealed Illinois police routinely issue tickets to children for minor misbehavior at school, the Illinois House [introduced legislation](#) that would make the practice illegal. Our investigation last year revealed that [school-based ticketing was rampant](#) across the state, bringing students into a judicial system meant for adults without legal protections. The U.S. Department of Education has also opened a [civil rights investigation](#) into an Illinois school district for students with disabilities after [we reported](#) that students at one school [were arrested](#) with stunning frequency — more than 100 times in the last five school years.

Washington Investigates Private Special Education Schools, Strengthens Oversight

In Washington, education officials [launched an investigation](#) into the state's largest network of privately run schools for students with disabilities, following [a harrowing report](#) we published with The Seattle Times exposing years of abuse complaints, lack of academic instruction and squalid conditions. And in April, lawmakers [voted nearly unanimously](#) to institute better oversight of a system that received more than \$50 million in public funding last school year.



Children and Families

Elina Asensio says custody evaluator Mark Kilmer downplayed her father's felony child abuse charge in evaluating whether her father should have custody of her. Trent Davis Bailey for ProPublica

Colorado Considers Reforms to Custody Evaluation System

Colorado lawmakers are considering two bills that would reform the way family courts in the state evaluate cases involving allegations of domestic abuse, saying ProPublica's reporting on the issue has catalyzed efforts to change the custody evaluation system. The Colorado courts suspended a well-known custody evaluator and launched a review of the entire state-approved roster in the weeks following our September investigation that found evaluators had continued to work after being disciplined by state regulators, including for domestic violence.

Utah Calls for Examination of Reunification Therapies

In February, we reported on two siblings in Utah who barricaded themselves in a bedroom in defiance of a judge's order to return them to the custody of their father. Despite state child welfare investigators determining that the father had sexually abused the children, the judge sided with the father in the custody case, persuaded by allegations against the mother of "parental alienation," a disputed psychological theory that has been rejected by mainstream science. Weeks after our reporting, the judge paused his order to return the siblings to their father while a new criminal probe looking into allegations of felony child abuse is resolved. Utah lawmakers are also calling for a re-examination of court-sanctioned reunification therapies for "alienated" minors.



Public Safety

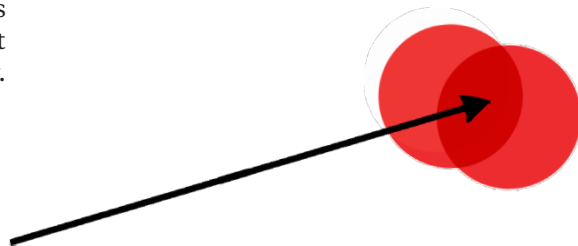
A memorial for the 21 victims of the May 24, 2022, school shooting in Uvalde, Texas. Evan L’Roy for The Texas Tribune

Texas Closes Juvenile Background Check Loophole

Last July, ProPublica and The Texas Tribune uncovered critical omissions in a 2009 state gun control law and its implementation. The law was meant to keep people with a history of serious mental health issues from legally acquiring firearms by asking courts to report all court-ordered mental health hospitalizations to a federal gun background check system. Following the May 2022 school shooting in Uvalde, the outlets discovered that local court clerks were not sharing that information for juveniles, either as a matter of policy or because they didn’t believe that they had to. In March, the Texas Senate passed a bipartisan bill that would plug the gap and explicitly require courts to share information for juveniles age 16 and older. It passed the Texas House in May and is headed to Gov. Greg Abbott’s desk to be signed into law.

Texas Lawmaker Calls for Improved Training for Police, EMTs

In February, a Texas state senator announced a slate of bills that aim to better prepare schools and law enforcement for mass casualty events, including one that seeks to improve emergency medical response. The legislation came two months after an investigation by ProPublica, The Texas Tribune and The Washington Post detailed how communication lapses among medical crews further hampered treatment for victims of the Uvalde school shooting by delaying ambulances, air transport and other emergency services.





Housing

Illustration by Lisa Larson-Walker/ProPublica

DOJ Opens Antitrust Investigation into Rental Pricing Software

The Department of Justice has opened an investigation into whether RealPage, a Texas-based property tech company, sells rent-setting software that violates antitrust laws. The investigation follows our reporting into RealPage’s apartment pricing software, YieldStar, which collects information from property managers, including what rents they are able to charge tenants. Critics say the software — used to help set prices for approximately 8% of all rental units nationwide — may be helping big landlords operate as a cartel to push rents above competitive levels in some markets.

In a statement RealPage said they “use aggregated market data from a variety of sources in a legally compliant manner,” and that their products “prioritize a property’s own internal supply/demand dynamics over external factors such as competitors’ rents and therefore help eliminate the risk of collusion that could occur with manual pricing.”

Louisiana Drops Lawsuits Against Hurricane Survivors

Following a Local Reporting Network investigation co-published with The Advocate | The Times-Picayune and WWL-TV, the state of Louisiana announced in February it would drop thousands of lawsuits against homeowners who received federal Road Home grants after hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005. The lawsuits were filed against people who received grants to elevate their homes but used the money to make repairs instead. However, our investigation found many of those homeowners said they had been told by Road Home representatives that they could use the money for repairs. We also reported that the majority of the grants were in lower-income neighborhoods and communities of color. The investigation examined how relief programs following natural disasters inadvertently punish such communities.



Immigration

Abarrotes Yuremi, a small grocery store in Waunakee, Wisconsin, is frequented by Nicaraguan dairy workers and other immigrants. Sebastián Hidalgo for ProPublica

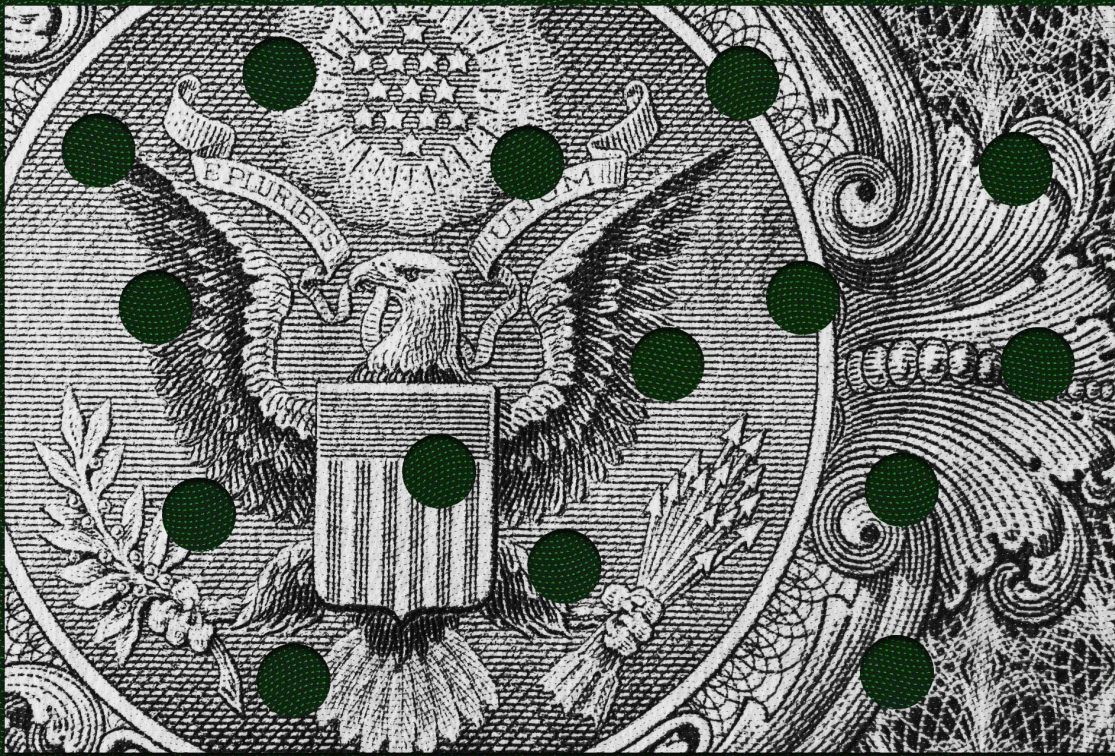
Wisconsin Officials Move to Address Problems Facing Dairy Farm Workers

Weeks after ProPublica published an [investigation](#) into the death of an 8-year-old Nicaraguan boy on a Wisconsin dairy farm and the flawed investigation that followed, state and local officials [called for action](#). The Dane County Board of Supervisors told ProPublica they were looking into measures that could improve language access for non-English speakers who interact with the sheriff's office. Our investigation shines a light on the dangerous working conditions and lack of protections for dairy farm workers — many of whom are undocumented — and highlights overlapping policy failures across labor, immigration, policing and language justice.

READER FEEDBACK

"Once again, with the most recent investigation into Justice Thomas' flexible ethics, ProPublica has lit fires under those who can bring about change. I read your report this morning and have been hearing about it all day from major and minor news outlets, and see that Congress is now in the hotseat to initiate its own investigation. You all do great and effective work."

—Annie in Minnesota



Business and Labor

Collage by Alex Bandoni/ProPublica. Source Image: Paul Taylor/Getty Images.

Goldman Sachs and Ballmer Pledge to Halt “Wash Sales”

In February, ProPublica [reported on a tax maneuver](#) that has been saving wealthy investors billions of dollars by skirting a century-old law. Congress outlawed “wash sales” in 1921, but Goldman Sachs and others have helped billionaires like former Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer see huge tax savings by selling stocks for a loss and then replacing them within a short period of time with nearly identical investments. After being contacted by ProPublica, Goldman Sachs said it would halt transactions like those featured in our reporting involving two classes of stock from the same company. A Ballmer spokesperson said that he would “amend his filings and pay any associated tax, interest or penalty promptly.”

States Prepare to Send Checks to Consumers Tricked Into Paying for TurboTax

In 2019, we showed how TurboTax lures people into using the software with promises of free filing, only for them to discover later they have to pay to finish the process. In response to our reporting, the Federal Trade Commission began investigating Intuit, the maker of TurboTax, to determine whether this violated laws against deceptive practices in commerce. In May 2022, the company reached a \$141 million settlement with state attorneys general to pay up to \$90 apiece to more than 4 million people who paid for TurboTax even though they were eligible to use it for free. In May of this year, New York Attorney General Letitia James announced that the process of actually mailing checks to all people was about to commence.



Technology

Kay Jenkins, left, a Miami real estate agent and model, says that a mysterious Instagram scammer known as OBN got her account banned and then duped her into paying him to get it back. Kristian “Murda” Murphy, right, had his Instagram account suspended by Meta hours after OBN threatened to take it down. Kendrick Brinson, special to ProPublica

Meta Bans 20-Year-Old Suspected of Being Notorious Instagram Scammer

ProPublica investigated a mysterious fraudster known as OBN who claims to have made hundreds of thousands of dollars off of influencers by exploiting Instagram’s security gaps. OBN is part of a booming underground community of Instagram scammers and hackers who shut down the profiles of influencers on the social network and then demand payment to reactivate them. Within weeks of ProPublica contacting Meta with evidence linking a 20-year-old man in Las Vegas to OBN, Meta sent him a cease and desist letter and banned him from its platforms.

READER FEEDBACK

“The pursuit of stories with long arcs involving the rich and powerful defy the click-and-soundbite era of contemporary news reporting, and are more important than ever. Thank you for everything you do. As a donor and subscriber, I applaud the effort it takes to produce quality, independent long-form journalism.”

—Matt in Ohio

The ASME logo is rendered in a white, stylized serif font, enclosed within a large white curly brace on the left side. The letters are white against a black background.

ASME

The logo for The Webby Awards features a stylized white 'W' icon on the left, followed by the text 'THE WEBBY AWARDS' in a white, sans-serif font.

THE
WEBBY
AWARDS

The IRE logo consists of the letters 'IRE' in a bold, white, serif font, set within a white square.

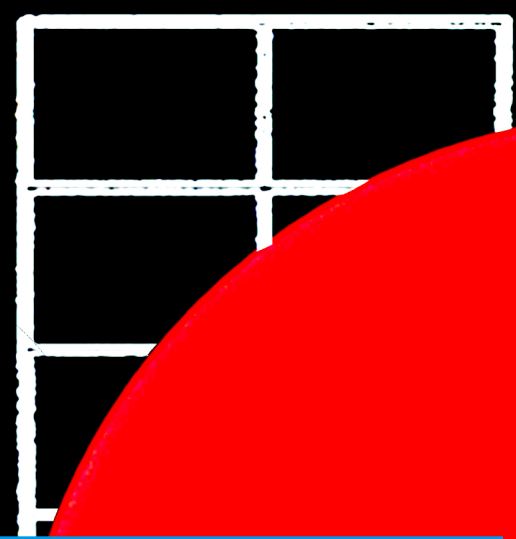
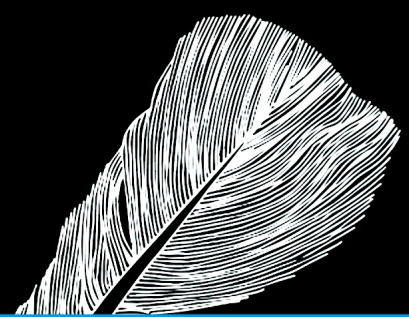
IRE

The logo for the Overseas Press Club of America features three circular icons, each containing a stylized globe, followed by the text 'Overseas Press Club of America' in a white serif font.

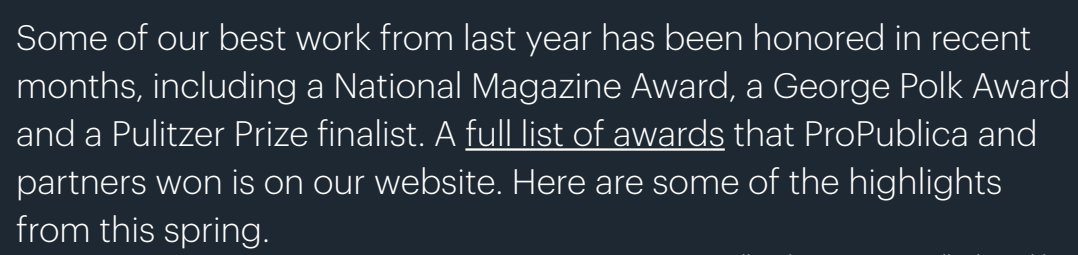
Overseas Press Club
— of America —

The text 'Investigative Reporters & Editors' is written in a white, elegant serif font, arranged in three lines.

*Investigative
Reporters
& Editors*

The section header 'Recognition for Our Work' is written in a large, white, sans-serif font, centered within a dark blue rectangular area.

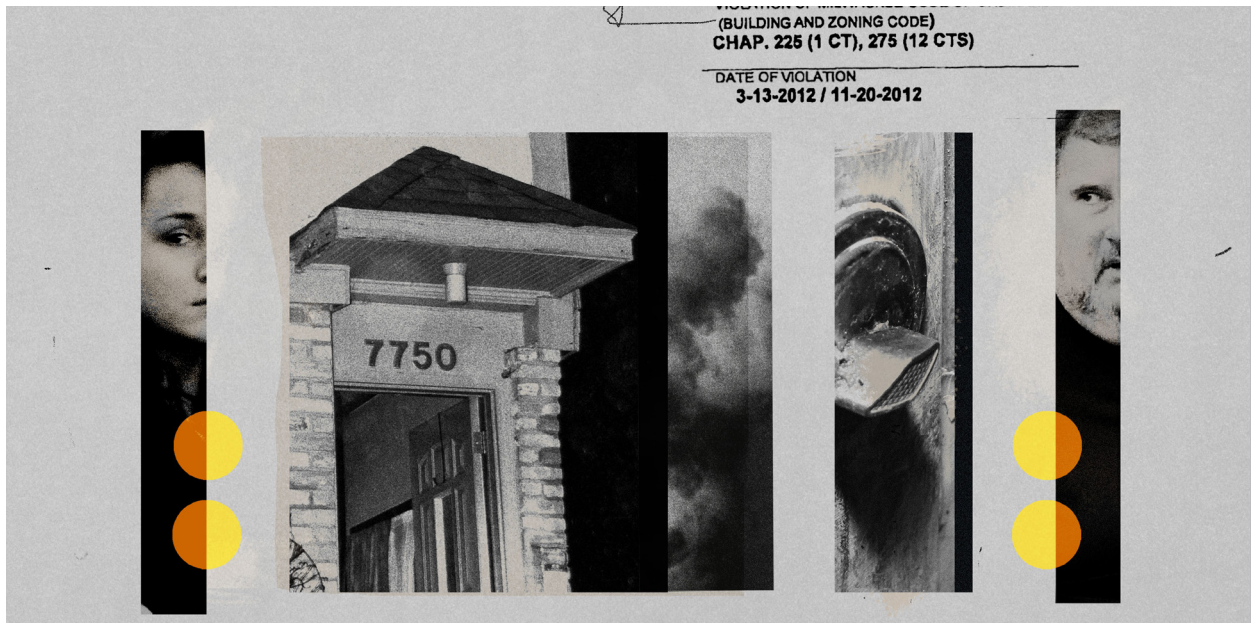
Recognition for Our Work

A paragraph of white text on a dark blue background, providing information about awards won by ProPublica and its partners.

Some of our best work from last year has been honored in recent months, including a National Magazine Award, a George Polk Award and a Pulitzer Prize finalist. A [full list of awards](#) that ProPublica and partners won is on our website. Here are some of the highlights from this spring.

A small line of white text at the bottom right of the page, crediting the collage artist.

Collage by Lisa Larson-Walker/ProPublica



Alex Bandoni and Anna Donlan/ProPublica. Source Images: Kristyna Wentz-Graff and Mike De Sisti/Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Warner Bros Studios/Getty Images and the West Allis Police Department.

National Magazine Award — Feature Writing

“The Landlord & The Tenant” (with the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel)

George Polk Award — Justice Reporting

“Words of Conviction”

Pulitzer Prize Finalist — Explanatory Reporting

“Stillbirths”

IRE Award — Print/Online

“The Price Kids Pay” (with the Chicago Tribune)

Hillman Prize for Magazine Journalism

“Endgame” (with The New Yorker)

Worth Bingham Prize for Investigative Journalism

“The Price Kids Pay” (with the Chicago Tribune)

Brechner Freedom of Information Award

“Words of Conviction”

Al Nakkula Award

“Words of Conviction”

Berger Award

“The Night Raids”

Overseas Press Club — Ed Cunningham Award

“The Night Raids”

Overseas Press Club — Malcolm Forbes Award

“Shadow Diplomats: The Global Threat of Rogue Diplomacy” (with the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists and more than 60 news organizations around the world)

Webby People’s Voice Award — Best Individual Editorial Feature - Media Company category

“A Uranium Ghost Town in the Making”



Partners

Partners have been a vital part of ProPublica since our founding. Over the past few months we extended our list, including both publishing and reporting partners, to 281 news organizations.

Ramon Riley, the cultural resource and Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act representative for the White Mountain Apache Tribe. Tomás Karmelo Amaya, special to ProPublica



Reporters Maryam Jameel and Melissa Sanchez doing community outreach and posting flyers at Supermercado Guerrero in Sparta, Wisconsin, for their “America’s Dairyland” series. Caleb Santiago Alvarado for ProPublica

Partner Spotlight

ProPublica reporters Melissa Sanchez and Maryam Jameel wanted to make sure their reporting about the death of a Nicaraguan immigrant child [on a dairy farm](#) in Wisconsin reached people who work in the dairy industry. They partnered with **USA Today Network-Wisconsin** to share the story across the state. Because many people in these communities only speak Spanish, the story was also translated into Spanish and co-published with **El Faro**. As a result, the article reached international readers in places like Nicaragua, including the hometown of the young boy and his father. Additionally, some of the people in migrant, Spanish-speaking communities have low literacy levels or work long hours that would keep them from reading the story. So the reporters worked with professional Spanish-language audio journalists to produce an audio narration of the story, which was also adapted for TikTok and Instagram. ProPublica also created a Spanish-language booklet of the story, which was distributed in stores, restaurants and other businesses in Wisconsin.

ProPublica reporters Mary Hudetz, Logan Jaffe and Ash Ngu investigated whether the promises of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, considered landmark human rights legislation, [had been fulfilled](#). To make people aware of issues surrounding the federal repatriation law, and to share their work with communities across the country, ProPublica and **NBC News** hosted an event to discuss the team’s reporting process. More than 150 people attended, including local, national and college journalists, museum professionals and tribal leaders. Reporters also created [a guide](#) for local reporters to understand how to use ProPublica’s [searchable database](#) to write about local museums’ compliance or noncompliance with NAGPRA and the reasons behind it. Nearly 50 local and regional newsrooms have used the data analyzed by ProPublica to report on the progress of repatriation by institutions in their area.

All Partners, January-April 2023

New partners marked in **bold**.

Advocate
Anchorage Daily News
The Atlantic
The Baltimore Banner
The Capitol Forum
Capitol News Illinois
The Current
Chicago Tribune
Crain's Chicago Business
The Dallas Morning News
Documented
El Diario Nueva York
El Faro
The Guardian
Honolulu Star-Advertiser
Idaho Statesman
International Consortium of
Investigative Journalists
InvestigateTV
KARE-TV (Minneapolis)
Lee Enterprises Midwest
The Maine Monitor
The Marshall Project
Military Times

Minnesota Public Radio
Mississippi Free Press
Mountain State Spotlight
NBC News
The Nevada Independent
The New Bedford Light
New Mexico In Depth
The New Yorker
Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal
Oregon Public Broadcasting
Rocky Mountain PBS
The Salt Lake Tribune
Searchlight New Mexico
The Seattle Times
Source New Mexico
South Bend Tribune
Sun Herald (Biloxi)
The Texas Tribune
The Wichita Eagle
Type Investigations
USA Today Network-Wisconsin
Verite
WPLN/Nashville Public Radio
WWL-TV

Collage by ProPublica of tearsheets from The Dallas Morning News, The Philadelphia Inquirer, the Chicago Tribune, The Columbia Missourian and The Green Bay Press Gazette.