

# Strategic philanthropy

*Building partnerships  
to support local journalism.*

Stacy Sullivan, director of local philanthropic partnerships, USA TODAY Network

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America's Newspapers Mega-Conference



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*‘Whatever your first priority, journalism needs to be your second, because trustworthy information, most often locally sourced, is essential to achieving any of these other important goals.’*

– Alberto Ibarguen, former Knight Foundation CEO, 2023.

# Philanthropic support for journalism exploding

- Increased support from traditional funders and funders new to journalism.
- Press Forward's \$500M initiative.
- USA TODAY Network: grants for education, watchdog, Indigenous issues reporting.
- Emerging national orgs: Journalism Funding Partners, American Journalism Project, National Trust for Local News.
- Local Media Association Lab for Journalism Funding: \$22M.
- Growing support for for-profits with record of civic journalism.

# Where's the money going?

- Digital startups.
- Nonprofit newsrooms.
- Reporting on rural issues.
- Underserved communities, communities of color.
- Sustainability, innovation.
- Fiscal agents, pass-throughs.
- Collaborative projects.
- Internships.

**COVERAGE WITH IMPACT.**



# What is impact?

- Action by lawmakers, leaders or voters.
- Arrests, indictments.
- Pageviews, engaged time, audience growth, subscriptions.

## *But also:*

- Social shares, comments.
- Newsletter signups.
- Other media pickups.
- Events, town halls, protests.
- GoFundMe, fundraising.
- Cited in political campaigns.
- Cited in legislative debates.



# Kickstarting your philanthropic journalism

1. Make it someone's responsibility.
2. Start local. Identify funders, build relationships.
3. Beware advocacy groups.
4. Make a wish list of beats, resources, projects.
5. Listening sessions.
6. Build pitch with deliverables, budget, outcomes.
7. Ask for more \$\$.
8. No strings attached.
9. Discuss renewal possibilities from outset.
10. Be patient. Be more patient.
11. Think about what's next: tracking, reporting, stewardship.
12. Content free, support acknowledged.

## TRACK IMPACT!



# Child welfare:

AZ Republic + AZ Community Foundation + Morrison



## INVESTIGATIONS

**Arizona child welfare: There are some issues we just won't let go**

**Our View: Arizona continues to fail its foster kids**

## INVESTIGATIONS

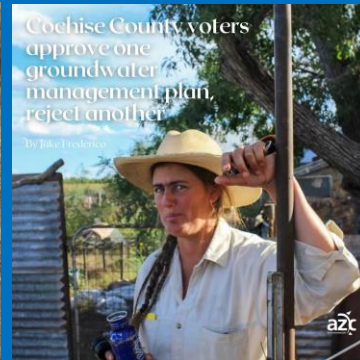
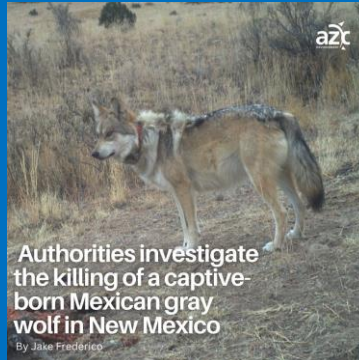
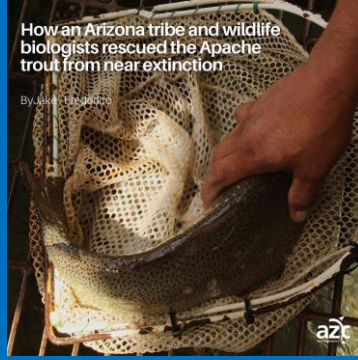
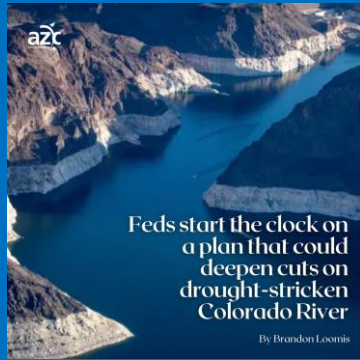
**18,000 Arizona kids are in foster care. Here's how you can help**

## NEWS

**Former Arizona foster child: 'There's no place like home'**



# Reporting on the environment: Arizona Republic + Pulliam Trust + Morrison





NINA MASON PULLIAM  
CHARITABLE TRUST

*'Acting on Nina's great love of animals and nature, we believe that if you want to help animals, you must protect habitat. And if you want to protect habitat, you must protect water.'*

-- Carol Peden Schilling, chair, Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust

## The team



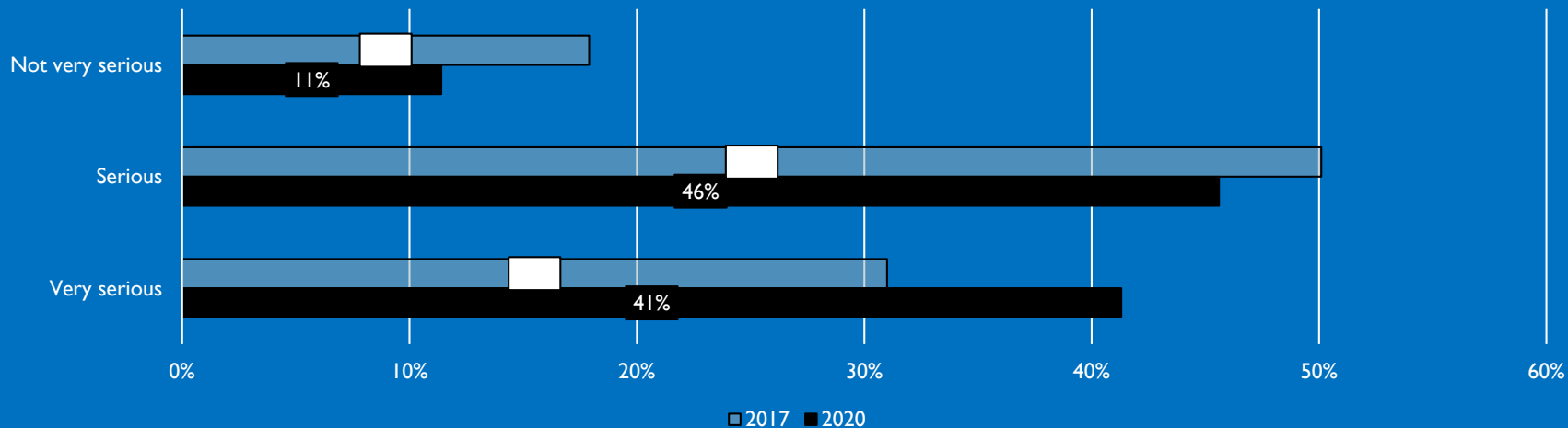
## The work

- Colorado River
- Arizona's 'sky islands'
- Groundwater overpumping
- Lithium, uranium mining
- Tribes and water
- Mexican gray wolf repopulation
- Border wall impact on wildlife habitat

## The impact

- Heightened awareness
- Public screenings of Colorado River documentary
- Weekly newsletter signups
- Grand AZ Facebook group
  
- Paying forward: Pulliam Environmental Fellows

Do you believe environmental issues facing Arizona, such as water and air quality, land and water use, and wildlife protection, are very serious and need to be addressed immediately, serious but not critical or not very serious?





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Q&A

**Track impact!**