



Robert R. McCormick Foundation Awards \$250,000 for Reporting Workshops

Journalists, bloggers and educators will receive free training on coverage of six topics: political polling, the census, Islam, tracking stimulus dollars, public pensions and the impact of the economic crisis on families.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Chicago, March 11, 2011 — A \$250,000 grant will fund journalism training on six key topics through the Robert R. McCormick Foundation's Specialized Reporting Institute (SRI) program. McCormick and its administrative agent for this grant, The Poynter Institute, selected the following organizations as hosts and developers of the training:

- American University's School of Communication, \$35,000, for a June workshop on political polling in advance of 2012 elections;
- Arizona State University's Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication, \$50,000, for training in May on reporting on the census;
- Middle Tennessee State University's School of Journalism, \$40,000, for an August workshop on covering Islam in the Bible Belt;
- The New England Center for Investigative Reporting at Boston University, \$50,000, for a May workshop to help reporters track the impact stimulus funds have had on their communities;
- The Society of American Business Editors and Writers, \$40,000, for training in Phoenix in June on covering the crisis in funding of public pensions; and
- The Suburban Newspapers of America Foundation and AP Managing Editors Foundation, \$35,000, for training in April in Chicago on the effects of the economic crisis on families.

This initiative supports the Robert R. McCormick Foundation's commitment to ensuring citizens have access to quality news content by providing resources and training to journalists. The ongoing transformation in the way news is reported and shared has created a need for specialized training for journalists, bloggers, educators and others whose work helps keep the public informed.

"This roster of SRI hosts will continue to help strengthen the quality and depth of journalism," said Clark Bell, director, Robert R. McCormick Foundation's Journalism Program. "By giving these organizations an opportunity to facilitate these workshops and share their knowledge, we hope to arm journalists with an expanded source network, valuable resource materials and a list of solid story ideas."

For details on the training or to apply for the workshops, go to the host training organization's Website.

The Robert R. McCormick Foundation developed the SRI program in 2007 to provide journalists and others with subject-specific expertise and practical reporting training in key issues. An SRI is organized and administered by a non-profit host, which plans and carries out the program. The training event convenes a diverse group of journalists, often from small to mid-sized news organizations, plus educators, for a program lasting two to three days. Participants represent all media platforms, and grant funds cover all or most of participants' travel, lodging and tuition.

In addition to a two- or three-day training event, each SRI host will create reporting resources on their topic to be published on News University, Poynter's e-learning site (www.NewsU.org). The NewsU resource pages will be free and accessible to all NewsU registered users. Some hosts are also conducting Webinars and creating other online resources.

Universities and non-profit organizations applied last fall to host an SRI. Winners were notified in the first quarter of 2011. McCormick Foundation also has awarded an SRI grant for \$50,000 to The Poynter Institute, which will conduct its Specialized Reporting Institute on a topic to be determined based on news events in 2011.

About the Robert R. McCormick Foundation

The Robert R. McCormick Foundation is committed to fostering communities of educated, informed and engaged citizens. Through philanthropic programs, Cantigny Park and museums, the Foundation helps develop citizen leaders and works to make life better in our communities. The Foundation was established as a charitable trust in 1955, upon the death of Colonel Robert R. McCormick, the longtime editor and publisher of the Chicago Tribune. The Robert R. McCormick Foundation is one of the nation's largest foundations, with more than \$1 billion in assets. For more information, please visit www.McCormickFoundation.org.

About The Poynter Institute

Founded in 1975 in St. Petersburg, Fla., The Poynter Institute is one of the nation's top schools for professional journalists and news media leaders, as well as future journalists and journalism teachers. Poynter offers training throughout the year in the areas of online and multimedia, leadership and management, reporting, writing and editing, TV and radio, ethics and diversity, journalism education and visual journalism. Poynter's News University (www.newsu.org) offers journalism training to the public through more than 200 interactive modules and other forms of e-learning. It has more than 170,000 registered users in 225 countries. Poynter's Web site, (www.poynter.org) is the dominant provider of journalism news, with a focus on business analysis and the opportunities and implications of technology.

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