

University of Arizona School of Journalism
Diversity, Equity, and Belonging Report
2023-24 Academic Year

Section 1: Highlights

Monica Chadha started as Director of Graduate Studies for Journalism and Studies for Global Media in the School of Journalism.

Linda Lumsden, professor emerita of journalism, was named the recipient of the 2024 Donald L. Shaw Senior Scholar Award by the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication's History Division.

Multimedia specialist **Jordan Chin** ('23), outreach coordinator **Jesse Tellez** ('20), and program coordinator **Meredith Edwards** joined the School of Journalism staff.

Senior **Leah Britton** was chosen as the 2024 Don Bolles Fellow and reported on the state legislature for the Arizona Mirror.

Adjunct instructors **Irene McKisson** and **Becky Pallack**, co-founders of Arizona Luminaria, were awarded the New Business of the Year Award at the 2023 LION Local Journalism Awards.

Undergraduate students **Noor Haghghi**, **Sam Parker**, **Kiara Adams**, and **Liv Leonard** became the inaugural class of Jamieson-Metcalf Scholars and spent a semester covering local public affairs for two local news outlets.

Professors **Kendal Blust** and **Rick Wiley** participated in the university's Culturally Responsive Curriculum Development Institute program to redesign journalism courses and implement culturally responsive practices.

Undergraduates **Daniela Cazares** and **Isabela Gamez** and graduate student **Susan Barnett** were awarded scholarships at the 2024 Arizona Latino Media Association Mixer in Phoenix, Arizona.

Professor Emerita **Carol Schwalbe** was named an exceptional and inspirational faculty member by Arizona Online. Schwalbe was nominated by students in her GLO 405/505 Media & Climate Change online course.

Graduate students **Alexandra Mora Medina** and **Natasha Cortinovis** were named 2024 Mellon-Fronteridades Graduate Fellows and through the fellowship, worked on projects highlighting diverse narratives from the U.S.-Mexico borderlands.

Section 2: Service

Monica Chadha served as an advisor on capstone projects of UPC students from Lima, Peru, as part of their Studies of Global Media capstone project.

Pate McMichael presented at the Center for Community News' Statehouse Reporting Conference at the Missouri School of Journalism on Sept. 29, 2023.

Susan Swanberg was a panelist at the “Sustaining Arizona’s Communities through Historical Newspapers” symposium hosted by the University of Arizona Libraries and the University of Arizona Public History Collaborative.

Monica Chadha and **Jeannine Relly** co-hosted an international group of journalists from Pakistan as part of the Center for Border and Global Journalism on Feb. 20, 2024.

Jeannine Relly was the principal investigator on a grant from the U.S. State Department through the U.S. Embassy in Yemen. Adjunct instructor **Mandy Loader** (‘21 M.A.) served as project manager on the one-year initiative, which focused on social entrepreneurship and youth in Yemen.

Susan Swanberg advised postdoc Pamela Pelletier as part of Pelletier’s participation in the CIRTL Postdoc Academy.

Monica Chadha participated in a presentation to recruit students from Universidad Peruana de Ciencias (UPC) in Lima, Peru as part of Arizona International.

Pate McMichael was a panelist for the AI & Elections discussion that was hosted as part of the university's AI at Arizona event series.

Jessica Retis spoke as a panelist and presented research on bilingualism and the media at the Latinx Studies Association Conference at Arizona State University.

Monica Chadha led/chaired a search committee to hire two new diverse assistant professors for the School of Journalism.

Section 3: Guest speakers

Phoenix-based multimedia journalist and documentary filmmaker **Pita Juarez** spoke to **Liliana Soto's** border reporting class to provide advice ahead of the class's semester-long multimedia project.

Sandy Sharp of NBCU Academy visited students in Liliana Soto's broadcast class ahead of the NBCU Academy Next Level Summit in October 2023.

Journalist and author **Alice Driver** spoke to Kendal Blust's food journalism class about her James Beard Award winning investigation into labor conditions at the food processing company Tyson and the disproportionate impacts of COVID-19 on meatpacking workers.

Noah Cooper, TEGNA's senior content recruiter, visited the School of Journalism and spoke to students about digital producing and broadcasting opportunities.

Annie Griffiths, National Geographic photojournalist, spoke to Pate McMichael's class ahead of her show "Annie Griffiths: Through the Lens, Creating a Ripple," at the Fox Tucson Theatre.

Bryan West, Taylor Swift reporter for USA Today, spoke to Liliana Soto's class via Zoom.

Jessica Retis hosted journalist and author **Eileen Truax** in her bilingual Global Latinxs class to discuss covering migration accurately through a global lens.

Section 4: Classroom topics and activities

Jessica Retis, **Liliana Soto**, and **Rick Wiley** took students in the bilingual journalism program and the fall border reporting class on a trip to Nogales, Arizona. The trip included a stop at the Nogales International newsroom, a tour of the city's historic Morley Avenue, interviews conducted at the border wall, and visits to the Wittner Museum and La Linea Art Studio.

Students in **Monica Chadha's** Entrepreneurial Journalism class, introduced for the first time in the Studies for Global Media program, suggested media ventures, including one for Hispanic women in Tucson.

Students in **Liliana Soto's** border reporting class produced and premiered "Beyond the Wall: The Journey Between Life and Death," a short documentary film about the journey of migrants, as part of a larger semester-long multimedia project.

Kendal Blust's food journalism class visited Tucson's Mission Garden for a tour of a "living agricultural museum" of the Sonoran Desert and 4,000 years of agricultural history in the region.

Students in **Caitlin Schmidt's** fall Reporting Public Affairs class visited the Pima County Superior Court to learn about the role of journalists in the criminal justice system.

Sara Kobilka of the university's Water Whys program spoke to students in **Liliana Soto's** Arizona Cat's Eye class about broadcast meteorology and helped students practice their on-air skills using green screen technology in the Severson Family Broadcast Studio.

Rick Wiley's spring Principles of Multimedia class produced the first ever 307 News show, a new project featuring in-studio segments and story packages produced as class assignments.

Barbara Eiswerth, executive director of the Iskashitaa Refugee Network, took students in **Kendal Blust's** food journalism class on an "edible trees tour" on the university campus as part of a guest lecture on local food harvesting and food waste.

Students in **Monica Chadha's** Journalism Theory class focused their project proposals on health policies for differently abled people in Puerto Rico, coverage of abortion rights in news media, and journalistic freedoms of reporters in Congo. These topics emerged after discussion throughout the semester about diversity in perspective, thought and how it is important to include these elements in student thinking, reporting, and writing.

Caitlin Schmidt invited Arizona Daily Star sport reporter **Justin Spears** ('17) to speak with RPA students about how public affairs knowledge can be applied to sports coverage.

The final Cat's Eye News production of **Liliana Soto's** spring broadcast capstone course featured student reports on the repeal of Arizona's abortion ban, campus war protests, Wildcats athletics, young voters, city outreach for houseless individuals, and border crossings by migrants during extreme heat.

Section 5: Research and professional projects

Jeannine Relly and collaborators' work on social equity and information rights was published by Routledge in an edited volume titled “Open Government and Freedom of Information.”

Jessica Retis co-authored the research article "Bilingual and Spanish Language Media in the U.S. as a Language Maintenance Tool Among Latinx Communities" published in the Spanish as a Heritage Language journal.

Jessica Retis was one of 20 Latina authors featured in the second volume of “Mujeres de la Comunicación” (Women of Communication).

Susan Swanberg's eugenics research was highlighted in an outreach article published by Scientia on Nov. 8, 2023.

Jeannine Relly's co-authored work titled “Violence, Trauma, and Reflexivity: Methodological Issues and Challenges in Conducting Research in Mexico’s Conflict Zones” was published in “Media and Politics in Post-Authoritarian Mexico: The Continuing Struggle for Democracy.”

Monica Chadha and **Jeannine Relly**'s research on a Yemen-based project was published in Journalism & Mass Communication Educator. "Facilitating Intercultural Experiences in Online Teaching during Wartime and Humanitarian Crises: Slack as a Learning Tool" is a study focused on the work during a nine-month project that included more than 70 Yemeni and U.S. students, more than a dozen professors in Yemen and the U.S., and a multimedia team based in Holland and Turkey.

Jessica Retis and Lourdes M. Cueva Chacón authored an article titled “¿Qué pasa with American News Media? How Digital-Native Latinx News Serves Community Information Needs Using Messaging Apps” that was published in the ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science.

Kendal Blust appeared on KJZZ’s The Show in the episode, “A tale of 2 abortion landscapes: Changes in Mexico and the U.S.,” to discuss the context of recent changes to abortion in Mexico and the United States in September 2023.

Monica Chadha and **Jeannine Relly**'s paper “Media Entrepreneurial Resilience in Precarious Times: A Model” was accepted for presentation at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) conference in Philadelphia.

Jeannine Relly's work with Saoussen Ben Cheikh, founder of the nonprofit MENA-can in Tunisia, was presented on a panel titled, "#MeToo: Unifying Global North and Global South media approaches to addressing violence against women" at the Journalism Education and Research Association of Australia Conference.

Section 6: Student club activities

The University of Arizona student chapter of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists (NAHJ) hosted a screening of "Below the Fold: The Pulitzer that Defined Latino Journalism" featuring a Q&A with former Los Angeles Times editor and Pulitzer Prize winner **Frank Sotomayor** ('66).

The Women in Journalism club hosted a résumé and cover letter workshop on Feb. 26. Upperclassmen, along with Professor **Kendal Blust** and Internship Coordinator **Kelly Copley**, helped provide tips to students on crafting effective documents.

NAHJ students held a joint meeting with Arizona State University's NAHJ student chapter to discuss ways the two schools can collaborate on events and workshops.

Adjunct instructors **Caitlin Schmidt**, **Irene McKisson** and **Becky Pallack** participated in a Q&A series hosted by the Women in Journalism student club.

Section 7: Students and alumni

Thatcher Warrick Hess, a graduate student in the Bilingual Journalism Program, was awarded a Tinker Field Research Grant to conduct fieldwork in South America and produce a documentary film.

Daniela Cazares participated in the 2024 CBC-UNC Diversity Fellowship and worked with the staff of WRAL News in Raleigh, North Carolina, to produce a newscast.

Tyler McDowell-Blanken ('15) launched the podcast 4AZ, which highlights black educators in Arizona.

Noor Haghghi appeared on NPR's Here & Now radio show to discuss a story she wrote for Arizona Luminaria about the University of Arizona's Indigenous Teacher Education Program.

Jack McElroy ('75) published a biography of Southwestern journalist, entrepreneur and community activist Carl Magee titled "Citizen Carl: The Editor Who Cracked Teapot Dome, Shot a Judge and Invented the Parking Meter."

Giorgia Menetre ('23) was the recipient of the Fall 2023 SBS Excellence in Leadership and Community Engagement Award.

Graduate student **Zulema Herrera** was chosen as a 2024 Ruben Salazar Financial & Conference Trip recipient by the National Association of Hispanic Journalists.

Zoe Montaña's article "Finding Home Through Folklórico" was featured in the Spring 2024 issue of the Arizona Alumni Magazine.

Allie Skaggs was named the Pac-12 Softball Scholar Athlete of the Year, making her the fourth player to win the award in Arizona softball history.

Jason Dayee reported on the hiring of Desireé Don Reed-Francois, the University of Arizona's first female full-time athletic director, for the Daily Wildcat.

Katya Mendoza ('22, M.A.) of AZPM and Acacia Hernandez of CBS Chicago spoke at the NAHJ student club's "Unsung Heroes" panel.

Sam Parker wrote a story for the Daily Wildcat about the significance of the saguaro cactus and interviewed **Jacelle Ramon-Sauberan**, a doctoral candidate in American Indian Studies with a minor in Journalism.

Danyelle Khmara ('17) won a Regional Edward R. Murrow Award in Investigative Reporting for the AZPM story "Cartels Making Billions on Human Smuggling."

Stephen Miller ('10) published an environmental book titled "Over the Seawall: Tsunamis, Cyclones, Drought, and the Delusion of Controlling Nature."

Diana Ramos ('22) was awarded a Jim McKay Scholarship by the NCAA for her work as a college athlete and sports communicator.

Graduate student **Susan Barnett** was hired by the Tucson Agenda to cover the area's underserved communities and produce stories in English and Spanish.

Mason Kumet, **Sam Parker**, and **Kiara Adams** were featured in an Arizona Daily Star story about the experiences of student journalists covering protests on campus.

Graduate student **Samantha Callicutt** wrote a story about a family of Syrian refugees living in Tucson that was published by the Arizona Luminaria as part of a larger series about people seeking asylum or refuge in Southern Arizona.

Section 8: Faculty and staff

Liliana Soto won a Regional Edward R. Murrow Award in the Investigative Reporting category for her work on the AZPM story “Don’t Bring Guns to Mexico.”

Academic Advisor **Paloma Boykin** won a 2024 SBS Outstanding Staff Award and was honored at the annual SBS Staff Appreciation event.

Jessica Retis completed the University of Arizona’s Academic Leadership Institute after participating in the 2023-24 cohort.

Adjunct instructor **Irene McKisson** won an award for best investigative journalism from the Institute for Nonprofit News.

Kendal Blust won two Public Media Journalists Association awards for her reporting with KJZZ. Her story “Asylum seekers turn to traditional arts to ease the strain of long waits at the border” won second place in the Arts Feature category, and she was part of a team that won second place in the Continuing Coverage category for their reporting “Title 42 leaves asylum seekers in limbo at the U.S.-Mexico border.”