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Inaugural Group of Statehouse Faculty Champions Announced

19 academics in 18 states awarded for their leadership of student statehouse reporting programs

BURLINGTON, Vt. — The Center for Community News at UVM announced on Monday its first cohort of Statehouse Faculty Champions. The awards go to 19 academics in 18 states who are leading student reporting programs that focus on state governance, legislation, and politics. The honor, which comes with a \$1,000 award, is a priority program for CCN in its efforts to help build a sustainable future for local news around the country.

“As statehouse beats become increasingly rare, partnerships with college reporting programs can be a news lifeline for underserved regions,” said CCN Director Richard Watts. “The dedicated faculty who are running these programs are creating a sustainable pipeline of critical information in their communities. We are thrilled to amplify their work and inspire others to jump in.”

Coverage of the nation’s statehouses has never been more important as consequential debates over education, public health, housing, gun ownership and more happen at the state level. Despite increasing need, the number of full-time statehouse reporters has [declined by 34% since 2014](#) according to Pew Research Center. In that time, [university-led reporting has stepped in to fill the gap](#). Today, some of the most rigorous reporting on urgent issues is being done by student reporters in states across the country. CCN released an [impact report on these programs](#) earlier this year.

Increasing the number and strength of university-led statehouse reporting programs is a top priority for CCN, which just concluded its first ever University Statehouse Reporting Conference in September 2023 in coordination with the University of Missouri. With the success of these early efforts, CCN plans to expand resources and attention to these programs in 2024.

“It’s a privilege to celebrate these Faculty Champions and their contributions to a thriving democracy,” said UVM College of Arts and Sciences Dean Bill Falls. The College hosts its own statehouse reporting program where UVM students provide critical coverage from Montpelier to Vermonters across the state.

The 2023 CCN Statehouse Reporting Faculty Champions are:

- Paola Banchemo, University of Alaska Anchorage - Anchorage, Ak
- Dodie Cantrell-Bickley, University of Georgia - Athens, Ga
- Janice Marie Collins, Ohio University - Athens, Oh
- Michael Cripps, University of New England - Biddeford, Me
- Laura Cullen Glasscock, Kentucky State University - Frankfort, Ky
- Gwyneth Doland, University of New Mexico - Albuquerque, Nm
- Jennifer Duck Brown, Belmont University - Nashville, Tn
- Deborah Howlett, Rutgers University - New Brunswick, Nj
- Patrick R. Johnson, Marquette University - Milwaukee, Wi
- Nancy Karibjanian, University of Delaware - Newark, De
- Matthew Laplante, Utah State University - Logan, Ut
- Pate Mcmichael, University of Arizona - Tucson, Az
- Laura Moorhead, San Francisco State University - San Francisco, Ca
- Marisa Porto, University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill, Nc
- Beth Potter, University of Colorado, Boulder - Boulder, Co
- Marie K. Shanahan, University of Connecticut - Hartford, Ct
- Brandon Shulleeta, University of South Carolina - Columbia, Sc
- Marquita Smith, University of Mississippi - Oxford, Ms
- Julia Thompson, Arizona State University - Tempe, Az

You can read more about each of these leaders and the Faculty Champions Program on the [Center for Community News](#) website.

About CCN

The [Center for Community News](#) at UVM is a nonpartisan nonprofit that is working to grow and strengthen university-led reporting programs around the country, to create a more sustainable future for local news outlets and the communities they serve.

About the University of Vermont

Since 1791, the [University of Vermont](#) has worked to move humankind forward. UVM's strengths align with the most pressing needs of our time: the health of our societies and the health of our environment. Our size—large enough to offer a breadth of ideas, resources, and opportunities, yet intimate enough to enable close faculty-student mentorship across all levels of study—allows us to pursue these interconnected issues through cross-disciplinary research and collaboration. Providing an unparalleled educational experience for our students, and ensuring their success, are at the core of what we do. As one of the nation's first land grant universities, UVM advances Vermont and the broader society through the discovery and application of new knowledge. UVM is derived from the Latin Universitas Viridis Montis (in English, University of the Green Mountains).