

A black and white close-up portrait of Andrew Carnegie, showing his eyes, nose, and a full white beard. He is wearing a dark suit jacket, a white shirt, and a dark tie.

Carnegie

RESULTS

The Center for Public Integrity: Defending Democracy with a Better Informed Citizenry

For more than 20 years, this nonprofit, nonpartisan news organization, now one of the nation's largest, has worked in the United States and around the world, producing original investigative journalism about significant public issues, revealing abuses of power and corruption and striving to make institutional power more transparent and accountable. Through its Web site, publications and media partnerships, the Center disseminates in-depth investigative reports on a range of government accountability and ethics-related issues, from campaign finance to climate change, tobacco smuggling to special-interest lobbying.

SPRING 2012

CARNEGIE CORPORATION OF NEW YORK

As newspapers everywhere cut staff or shut down, the Center for Public Integrity serves as an unbiased source that is ever more critical to meeting the public's need to know. The promise of deep research and reporting on public interest issues led Carnegie Corporation of New York to support the Center for Public Integrity early on—primarily to strengthen the organization's investigative reporting on the influence of campaign contributions on policymakers. Geri Mannion, program director of the Corporation's U.S. Democracy and Special Opportunities Fund, saw the organization as a "central player in the campaign finance reform field." Not an advocacy group, its mission is, and always has been, investigative journalism. Through research and reports, plus close working relationships with news media, its reporters have been able to follow the money and inform the public, raising important issues of potential and existing conflicts of interest between officials and special interests. "They reveal the facts," Mannion says, "leaving it to the news media and other public interest groups to explain and illustrate how the current system of financing is detrimental to the public interest."

Elected officials had few incentives to enact comprehensive campaign finance reform in 1995, when the first Corporation grant to the Center was being considered. Political change would not occur unless driven by an educated and engaged public, and the reports and studies undertaken by the Center would educate the public about the special interest groups and individuals that influence policymaking, and about the need for citizens to hold government at all levels accountable, Mannion believed. Much of the Center's early work had already proven to be instrumental in changing, advancing or reforming major public policy initiatives. Carnegie Corporation's U.S. Democracy Program set a goal of increasing civic participation while increasing voter knowledge and understanding of government. The Center's efforts fueled these activities, and the first of many grants to the Center was approved.

A Watchdog Is Born

The Center for Public Integrity was founded in 1990 by Charles (Chuck) Lewis, a producer of the CBS News program *60 Minutes*, who previously had been an investigative reporter for ABC News. Lewis worried that investigative reporting was not widely valued, and important stories never saw the light of day. "In America, in 1989, it appeared as if public service had gone to hell," he recalled on the Center's 10th anniversary. "From the Iran-Contra scandal to the savings and loan scandal, from the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) scandal to the resignation

of the Speaker of the House...there were amazing, appalling, stunning disorders of democracy to cover. But they weren't being well covered... The media may not have been asleep, but it was certainly turning a blind eye to some serious problems." Lewis, who had worked in the news business since age 17, had to take action. So he quit *60 Minutes* to found a nonprofit that would investigate the stories no one else was willing to cover.

Starting out, Lewis ran the organization from his house. He began raising money and appointed two fellow journalists, Charlie Piller and Alex Benes, as the first members of the board. The Center's debut report, "America's Frontline Trade Officials," was an investigation of the "revolving door" of White House trade officials who were leaving government and becoming foreign lobbyists. It was presented to national media at a major news conference and was covered by several network and cable stations. Other early reports included "Saving for a Rainy Day: How Congress Turns Leftover Campaign Cash into Golden Parachutes;" and "Under Fire: U.S. Military Restriction on the Media from Grenada to the Persian Gulf." By the 1992 presidential election, the Center was deep into reporting on candidates and ethics-related topics. Two reports that year, one identifying the candidates' unpaid policy advisers and another investigating the conflicts of interest of the party chairmen, made national headlines. With only three full-time employees, the Center had in three years released 13 such studies.

The breakthrough year for the Center for Public Integrity was 1996, with the publication of *The Buying of the President*. The book, published at the start of the primary season, was the first ever to track the relationships between the major presidential candidates and their "career patrons." A year earlier, Carnegie Corporation gave its inaugural grant to the organization to support a project on the influence of campaign contributions on the 1996 presidential candidates. The Center researched campaign contribution records for each candidate and assessed what contributors received in return for their investment—and these findings led to the book. *The Buying of the President* was covered in hundreds of news stories on TV, radio and in the papers. PBS made it the basis of a *Frontline* documentary. Again with Corporation support, the Center held two conferences to help journalists improve campaign reporting. The first conference brought together newspaper editors, TV producers and political experts to consider how to cover presidential elections in more depth and detail. The second looked for ways of examining candidates' financial connections to special interests.

Later that same year the Center made news when it released the award-winning report, "Fat Cat Hotel," profiling 75 donors to the Clinton campaign and the Democratic

Party who had spent the night in the Lincoln Bedroom (and elsewhere) in the White House. The Center was becoming known as a new government watchdog and source for campaign scoops. The pace never let up, and the Corporation continued to support its activities for years to come. Staff members were kept busy studying congressional records to determine how financial contributions influenced laws and policies on issues such as food prices, the environment and workplace safety while helping several states computerize their legislatures' campaign finance records and educating local media on use of this data.

Another important project was an examination of state ethics and disclosure laws, which limit the activities of policymakers. This investigation involved matching descriptions of every state's laws with case studies analyzing the potential conflicts of interest likely to arise between lawmakers' legislative duties and their outside livelihoods, providing citizens with a picture of how their legislatures work. Twenty-four states changed their policies as a result of this investigation.

A Corporation-supported study of the politics of national security explored the relationships between defense contractors and government officials, analyzing how government contracts had affected defense firms' profits and tracking those firms' political contributions and lobbying activities—resulting in the resignation of the chairman of the Defense Policy Board. Investigations of this caliber during Chuck Lewis's tenure (1989 through 2004) led to the publication of over a dozen books and several hundred investigative reports. The Center was honored more than 30 times by national journalism organizations, and Chuck Lewis was awarded a MacArthur Fellowship.

An Ecosystem Evolves

“The Center for Public Integrity is truly the house that Chuck built,” says Bill Buzenberg, executive director for the past five years. Buzenberg was formerly vice president of news for National Public Radio, as well as an NPR foreign affairs correspondent and London bureau chief, who was once a Peace Corps volunteer. He says the Center emerged “out of frustration in a way.” Lewis felt there needed to be an organization with no sacred cows, where stories would not be blocked as they often were at the major networks. The very first reports the Center put out affected government policy, and that's what Buzenberg and his team still want to accomplish today.

Methods have changed, however. “The Center would produce a report and hold a news conference where they would pass out the report or book,” he says. “The goal was

to put the facts in the hands of journalists and become a source. Today we don't hold news conferences, but we do distribute our work to hundreds of other journalists and we partner across all platforms. A large segment of our audience is reading it on the *Huffington Post*. This past Sunday it was in *Le Monde*; last week the *International Herald Tribune*. That was our story, ‘Looting the Seas,’ which also appeared in all the papers in Australia. We are producing big, deep projects. They're very well researched based on data and documents; they are libel reviewed; they hold up and travel amazingly widely. Chuck Lewis is on the board of directors, and everything we do is still based on his vision—using the tools of investigative journalism to reveal abuses of power, corruption and betrayal of public trust. The reason I'm here is because of what he started, what he saw the need for, but in a changing ecosystem.”

Buzenberg is hard put to choose the most important stories among the Center's considerable output. The Center's 2003 online posting of the draft legislation for the draconian PATRIOT II Act, which Congress had not been consulted about and the administration denied was in the works, caused a bipartisan uproar, Buzenberg says, and earned the Center its largest online audience ever. That proposed legislation ultimately was withdrawn. A story on Halliburton the same year showed it was the largest contractor of the Iraq war, and that most of the company's contracts were no-bid—a practice that was changed after the Center did the numbers and proved what Buzenberg claims “everybody already knew.” *The Buying of the President*, the book Carnegie Corporation's Democracy Program repeatedly supported, has been published four times—with the 2004 edition hitting *The New York Times* bestseller list.

In 2006, the Center's “Power Trips” investigation used the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to secure records for all lobbyist-paid travel by members of Congress and their staffs. When it was revealed that \$50 million had been spent on 23,000 trips during a five-and-a-half-year period ending in 2005, privately funded travel plummeted and was eventually banned. More recently, the 2009 analysis, “Who's Behind the Financial Meltdown?” identified the 25 companies most responsible for sinking the economy (with Countrywide heading the list) by originating nearly \$1 trillion in subprime loans. The widely publicized report was entered into the congressional record and has been used by attorneys general to go after offending lenders.

The appalling pandemic of rape at American colleges and universities was the focus of the Center's 2009 series, *Sexual Assault on Campus: A Frustrating Search for Justice*. After a year of crunching the education department's numbers, investigators proved that institutions were covering up this crime by handling it quietly and administratively

and that most perpetrators were not even suspended. Vice President Biden publicly demanded change, and a number of schools took action, while Congress introduced new legislation to address the campus assault issue.

All these stories, and numerous others, have been award winners, underscoring Buzenberg's claim that this is an "amazing little institution with a big reach and impact." The Washington-based domestic staff of about 50 comprises mainly journalists, including "interns and a lot of young researcher types" plus a number of veteran reporters. There are freelancers out in the states, and the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ), a global network of freelance investigative reporters launched as a project of the Center, covers issues that go beyond national borders. These 100-plus journalists in 50 countries are the "Jedi knights of the investigative world," in Buzenberg's words, who work for the Center on a project basis.

The Center's impact is as global as its workforce, especially with the exploding dissemination opportunities offered by the Internet and social media. Webinars have largely replaced the printing and handing out of reports, for instance, and data is now presented in dynamic and interactive formats. One example is the "Poisoned Places" project that mapped examples of the failure of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to do its job nationwide, enabling readers to enter their zip code and pinpoint the environmental dangers where they live. The project, a partnership with National Public Radio, is a finalist for the 2012 Goldsmith Prize presented by Harvard's Shorenstein Center, which honors investigative reporting that promotes more effective and ethical conduct of government, the making of public policy or the practice of politics.¹

Aiming for the widest possible worldwide audience, the Center has formed partnerships across all platforms. The steadily growing list includes *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, the *International Herald Tribune*, *Huffington Post*, *Politico*, *Frontline*, ABC, CBS, NPR, BBC, *Le Monde* in France, *Proceso* in Mexico, *Novaya Gazeta* in Moscow, the *South China Morning Post* in Hong Kong, along with *Twitter* and *Facebook*. Besides morphing distribution channels, the Center wrestles with an evolving business model. Initially 100 percent of funding came from organizations such as Carnegie Corporation, and foundations are still its largest and most critical source of support. Buzenberg says today more revenue streams are needed and they take a long time to develop. Online ads, syndication and email campaigns for individual funding are all being tried out. "All of journalism is looking for a new business model," he says, "and we want to be the ones

to show how it's done. We are the biggest investigative journalism Center; in other words, we have the most people. Keeping that going is a challenge."

Meeting that challenge is paramount, whatever the risks. Investigative journalism takes time and resources, and getting it wrong is not an option, because stories name names. "FOIA requests take a long time," Buzenberg explains, "and sometimes we have to sue to get information, and the government negotiates. To establish and keep long-term supporters is a big deal; we have 40 to 50 behind us so we can do this kind of work." And they must keep doing it, he contends, since there are at least 25,000 fewer reporters working today than there were five years ago. As a result, huge government departments aren't covered anymore, and the reporters who did that heavy lifting are gone. "We're doing it now," says Buzenberg. "We're the primary source of investigative journalism that any democracy needs. If we don't do it, it won't be done."

A Pillar of Political Reform

Given the decline of TV network news and dwindling of newspaper circulations nationwide, Carnegie Corporation's Geri Mannion made sure the Center for Public Integrity along with like-minded programs, such as the Project On Government Oversight (POGO) and the National Security Archive, stayed a central grantee of the Strengthening U.S. Democracy Program through another decade. Support went to the Center's ongoing domestic program as well as efforts to strengthen organizational capacity long-term, especially in the areas of strategic communications and dissemination. The organization pursued an ambitious agenda of creating online, searchable databases; rankings of states according to such factors as degree of legislative disclosure; profiles of companies and individuals and explanations of laws featured in its reports and stories; and numerous public outreach activities.

At the same time, the Center intensified its efforts to achieve government transparency by examining the disclosure laws and ethics statutes regulating state executive and judicial branches; dissecting disclosure forms and highlighting best and worst practices; and cataloging ethics rules meant to protect the public from political corruption—all to highlight which states had effective mechanisms in place, and which did not. Investigators looked into the reported and unreported personal financial holdings and past employment of governors and cabinet-level officials in every state, examined the personal financial holdings of the justices of each state's highest court and compared their assets to their docket of cases, displaying individual pages of

¹ <http://www.npr.org/series/142000896/poisoned-places-toxic-air-neglected-communities>

findings for each state on the Center's reorganized Web site.

Corporation funding helped expand the successful LobbyWatch program, which tracked a decade of federal lobbying reform and disclosed instances of abuse. The expansion quantified the effects of such influence, connecting databases of all federal contracts to lobbyists in order to make clear why companies invest millions in these efforts—including players like the gun industry, mining and other fossil fuel producers and foreign countries accused of human rights violations. The Corporation also backed *The Buying of the President 2008*, the fourth version of the critically acclaimed book. This edition featured not only in-depth profiles of all major party candidates and the special interests subsidizing them, it also focused on less traditional movements and forces that had begun to shape presidential politics, such as the Christian Coalition and MoveOn.org. A strategic communications plan was implemented to push out all the Center's work, increasing partnerships and emphasizing more robust cross-platform approaches, and upgrading the Web site to be more branded and user-focused—all to further strengthen the Center's position as the media pillar of the political reform movement.

Security Equals Money

Keeping a watchful eye on the defense budget is just one way the Center continues to fill a critical journalistic gap. The 2003 Carnegie Corporation grant to study the politics of national security aimed to make the public aware of the tradeoffs in domestic spending required to build a strong defense. At that time, post-9/11 threats to U.S. security required new expenditures and new measures to protect citizens, rendering the choice of programs, and the contracts awarded to undertake them, a highly political mix.

The Center's series of investigative reports analyzing the defense industry's political contributions and lobbying expenditures over several years raised troubling questions about whether the relationship of defense and allied industries with government officials was in the public interest. More recently, reporter R. Jeffrey Smith, who cut his teeth on national security and won a Pulitzer writing about the corrupting influence of money and politics for the *Washington Post*, has taken that topic on with new intensity. "Defense spending has been immune from oversight for over ten years," Smith says. "It went up by two-thirds to an unprecedented level and a lot of money was wasted. With today's fiscal pressures, that spending is in play in a way that makes it politically and journalistically interesting. When we write about how the money is being spent, it matters."

Smith joined the Center in September of 2011 after

25 years in a series of key reporting and editorial roles at the *Washington Post*, including national investigative editor and national security correspondent. There he wrote about House Majority Leader Tom DeLay and lobbyist Jack Abramoff; about Abu Ghraib and military prisoner abuse; and about the Pentagon, arms proliferation and terrorism in the Middle East, among other subjects. "The work here is similar to what I once did, but found harder to do as the years progressed," he says. "Newspapers are less interested in deep investigations today."

The pace of publication is a benefit enjoyed by Smith and other veteran reporters who have come over to the Center. "At a major newspaper it could take a very long time to get something in print," Smith says. "The freedom to publish at greater length here is also a plus. And add-ons are possible." For instance, the recent story, "Puncturing Hot Air Balloons in Defense Spending," featured a Center-commissioned poll to determine whether the public is in favor of cutting defense spending. A growing list of partners eagerly publishes these stories: MSNBC picked up the very first piece on the defense department's inability to pass an audit. "Basically, they don't know where or how their money is being spent," Smith says. "It's appalling." The McClatchy papers published the Center's report on the Pentagon's waste of \$18 billion in a futile search for the perfect radio to bring the Internet to the battlefield—information that reached two million readers. And the *Atlantic* used a long story on the different ways politicians in Washington are making false claims about defense spending, printing it verbatim, according to Smith.

"Everyone at the Center has investigative reporting in their DNA," Smith says. "There's no need to explain what we need to do, and people don't just talk, they listen. Everything is done in a collaborative way without the sense of territoriality that's commonplace at daily newspapers." The topics he is working on are "more at the core of my interests," and he finds the challenge engaging. Compared to a paper like the *Post*, the Center is a much smaller place, he admits. There's no comparison to decades past, when a newspaper's large research staff was always ready, willing and able to acquire difficult bits of information. But those resources have dwindled, and the similarity between the two organizations is greater now. Although the Center for Public Integrity has to fight for funding year by year to survive, for Smith and other journalists who have watched their industry crash and burn, it's a chance to build something new from the ground up.

He's looking forward to bringing together a cadre of skilled reporters to be regular contributors or someday join the staff full time, "a team of truth-tellers on complex stories. . . . The goal is to extend our reach and publish more frequently with as much impact as we can possibly

muster,” says Smith. “We’re paying attention to an aspect of security others are looking for; we don’t have to find a market, we just have to meet it. The Center’s concern is accountability—where tax dollars are being spent or misspent. No one else is doing this work with vigor or professionalism. The need is there.”

Global Ventures

While domestic programs have been Carnegie Corporation’s priority, the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ), the Center’s global arm, also has a role to play. Created in 1997 to extend watchdog journalism worldwide, its tactic is to marshal the talents of some of the world’s leading investigative journalists and produce collaborative reports on issues that transcend borders. Carnegie Corporation’s International Development Program turned to ICIJ in 2006 in response to an urgent request from Nigeria for an investigative reporting workshop around the issue of state corruption. Like most developing nations, Nigeria lacked professional reporting expertise on such topical issues as politics, finance, environment or corruption, and the training session led by ICIJ helped make up for this shortfall.

But training is only one aspect of the consortium’s repertoire. Its major strength is the capacity for reporting stories that cannot be told from a single national perspective. Unlike traditional investigative journalists, correspondents from as many as five continents track a single story, analyzing large flows of information (often money-related) from country to country and sharing their discoveries.

“We can produce stories that no one else can produce,” says executive director Marina Walker. We have more than 100 reporters, and we work with all of them. It’s a big responsibility and an important mission.” A native of Argentina, Walker had completed her journalism degree at the University of Missouri when she learned about ICIJ and convinced her professors to go to bat for her in order to get hired. Seven years later she’s running the show.

“The key thing for us is to have the right story idea,” Walker says. “It’s the most important of all the decisions; will it be safe, have an impact, be worth it? In many cases our reports have to do with power, corruption and crime,” she says, as exemplified by the recent series of investigative pieces, “Looting the Seas,” about overfishing, fraud and black marketeering in the bluefin tuna industry. “Fishing was perfect because it involves the oceans that belong to everybody and nobody,” she says. “It’s a real free-for-all. We had to look at it from all different countries’ perspectives and to consider trade, criminal enforcement and environmental

issues. This story was very hard to report; it involved rough characters in the Mediterranean and the South Pacific and some really huge corporations.

“Working in Japan, for example, where 80 percent of the bluefin is consumed, was very challenging because there’s no tradition of investigative reporting there, and requests for data are always turned down,” Walker explains. “Getting interviews is very difficult. You must first have a relationship that’s cultivated for months or years. We even had trouble finding a reporter who would work there. Finally we were able to find one who had lived there for 20 years and knew all the social nuances. We got a crucial interview with a Japanese official that was just incredible, and documents too. We were down to the wire because we needed to publish before a big meeting of nations on the issue. It was touch and go.”

The team recently added about 40 new members in Guatemala, Egypt, Jordan and other hot spots in the biggest expansion since day one. They use Skype and have set up a virtual newsroom that helps them work together; they can chat, share documents and photos and edit stories. “With every project we try at least once to bring everyone together, which no amount of virtual meetings can replace,” Walker says. “They need to collaborate with one another to build dedication, trust and a clear understanding of goals. When people are all over the world, it’s hard to keep everyone on track. We have so many language issues besides. Reporters file in their own language, and we have to translate. Each project is like a miracle.”

Achieving Balance

Also on the global level, as mass media has continued to evolve, the Center for Public Integrity has transformed itself to meet the sector’s changing demands—an achievement made possible with the help of such supporters as the Deer Creek, Ford, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur, Park, Popplestone, Rockefeller, Streisand and Sunlight foundations. Joint funding from Carnegie Corporation’s U.S. Democracy Program and its Journalism Initiative in 2007 was dedicated to helping the Center expand online public outreach to include weekly podcasts summarizing investigative news from across the country; videos showcasing the people and places featured in the Center’s reports; and e-newsletters to contextualize the Center’s reporting.

The potential to measure the Center’s effectiveness by analyzing traffic to its Web site was of interest to the Journalism Initiative, then headed by Susan King, Carnegie Corporation vice president, External Affairs, and program director, Journalism Initiative, Special Initiatives and Strategy.

(King is now dean of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.) The goal was for the Center to prove its value as an essential resource for policymakers, journalists, advocates, researchers and the general public on issues related to government activities and accountability. An increase in unique and repeat visits and in the length of time users engaged with the Web site would indicate success, and project staff members would track citations of the Center's work across all media to assess its relevance, quality and timeliness.

Continuing that support, the Corporation's latest round of grants aimed to assist with three key needs in strengthening the Center's infrastructure: technology, immediacy and financial stability. To remain relevant, the Center must balance its intensive long-term investigative reporting with a Web presence that offers both a platform for commentary and interactive opportunities for the audience. Staff members have had to rebrand the organization as a significant digital news outlet and real-time content provider while maximizing online marketing and simultaneously launching a major donor program.

iWatch News (iwatchnews.org) is the Center for Public Integrity's online publication featuring exclusive daily stories as well as in-depth investigations, launched in April 2011 with significant funding from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. Experimenting with new revenue models, the Center sells advertising space on the site, but offers readers who want to avoid ads a subscription for a yearly membership fee. As Bill Buzenberg told *The New York Times*, "We want to be a model to show journalism, if it's good it can be paid for."

A visitor to the *iWatch News* site in February 2012 would have encountered the lead story on the \$49 million raised by presidential super PACs through the previous December. "How many individual donations would it take to match campaign contributions by the super PACs?" asks reporter John Dunbar. The answer is "39,250, provided they gave the maximum amount." Outside groups that funded numerous attack ads in the GOP primaries collected this cash, Dunbar writes, with huge donations from billionaires, corporations and labor unions—fundraising that would have been illegal but for the pivotal *Citizens United*² and lower court decisions in early 2010. When considering all super PACs in 2011, total contributions were almost \$100 million, he adds—a fact uncovered in a review of Federal Election

² *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission: In January 2010 the Supreme Court ruled that political spending is a form of protected speech under the First Amendment, and the government may not keep corporations or unions from spending money to support or denounce individual candidates in elections.*

Commission documents filed by super PACs that spent money to support or defeat a presidential candidate in one of the primaries. More reports along these lines are sure to be part of the Center's lineup heading toward the 2012 presidential election.

Other stories on the home page covered the inspector general's plan to examine the "model workplaces" program; how whistleblowers were silenced in mortgage crisis cover-ups; Congress's stalling of a landmark diesel exhaust study; and R. Jeffrey Smith's piece on the Pentagon's misreporting of long-term weapons costs.

Overseeing the Center's multiple projects and outlets is executive editor Ellen Weiss, who heads the domestic investigations and editorial staff. Formerly senior vice president of news at NPR, Weiss managed 36 bureaus and more than 400 U.S. and international staffers who have racked up a slew of important press awards during her tenure. "As someone who oversaw the transformation from exclusively one platform to multiple platforms, I feel the adaptation to faster pace and greater variety has been remarkable," she says. Weiss finds such responsiveness unusual in a newsroom, which can be a "very conservative place when it comes to change." At the Center, "people are game for trying new things," she says. "They are committed to the work and want to advance the mission. They want more than one way to tell a story. I can't describe how huge that is!"

For many years reporters walked into a newsroom and knew just what had to be done, Weiss says. "Now they have to figure out the Web, then there's mobile, then social media." It calls for new skill sets, training and staff with the capacity to scale the work differently. One person can have a multiplier effect on the work for everyone else because of their access to audiences, she notes, which is wonderful but can be overwhelming. "I have set fairly aggressive social media goals for the organization, and all journalists have to engage. We're not a large organization, but we do a couple of things that aren't done anymore by anyone else. We do in-depth investigative reporting, which a lot of newsrooms have had to cut back. We also do a lot with data. People are recognizing its importance but it's also an investment."

Wrestling with funding is an obvious and endless challenge, Weiss admits, but it's just as daunting to figure out what the right formula is—"what makes you distinctive. This is something every kind of news organization struggles with today, in part because things are so fluid. Just when you figure out your strategy, something new comes along. Because of our size we have to figure out where to make our bets. That's a struggle we have—how to have that balance. Now that people can be constantly engaging with news media, what do you want your place to be in that ecosystem?"

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Integrity will find its ideal place in the new media universe, securing its funding base and rolling out hard-hitting reports far into the future. “The Center is a respected source with considerable influence among policymakers and the public,” she stresses. “The trusted, data-driven information it supplies is crucial to key decision makers, and its enhanced use of new technologies has expanded both the Center’s audience and its impact. Without question, this organization is a valuable partner in the struggle for a better, more open and accountable government.”

Written by: Karen Theroux. Theroux is a writer/editor in Carnegie Corporation’s Public Affairs Department.



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