

Janet Wu: ... Vermont's High School Newspaper. The Register broke a story about a guidance counselor facing disciplinary charges. The principal ordered the article removed, the students didn't give up and instead began a public campaign using city meetings and the media. Eventually the school relented. They re-posted the story and more importantly they updated its policy to prevent similar censorship in the future. And in fact, they've got another update that they are going to be offering us this morning. So I'm going to ask the group of editors from The Register to head up this way and I present to you the future leaders in journalism and they are Halle Newman, Nataleigh Noble, Jenna Peterson, Julia Shannon-Grillo and their advisor Beth Fialko Casey. Ladies and gentlemen please give a big round.

Janet Wu: Come on up. I'm going to put your right here. Stand here. Make a little semi circle. Go back a little bit further. One step forward. And you can hold it because you're in the middle. Speaking on behalf of the group is Halle Newman.

Halle Newman: Thank you. Hi. We are so honored to accept this award on behalf of The Register. So when Julia, Nataleigh, Jenna and I met for the first time this year to plan out our roles as editors we talked about how we would design the newspaper, how we would sell ads and how we can get our new journalism recruits excited about the class. However by the third week of school, it was clear we would be dealing with some issues outside of our job descriptions.

Halle Newman: When our principal censored our story, breaking the news about misconduct charges against our head of guidance, we were shocked, confused, and mad. It seemed so silly to censor a public record. Before we could even think about how to handle the situation, the press began contacting us about the censorship, opening a door for our voice. You gave us the confidence and the platform to fight for our constitutional rights. You made us realize that we were not alone in our fight. That's when we understood that we were part of something bigger than our high school newspaper.

Halle Newman: For that sense of belonging and for that sense of empowerment we thank you. We would not have won this battle without the guidance of the Student Press Law Center and the wisdom of Mike Donoghue who has become sort of a godfather to The Register, so thank you Mike. Yeah.

Halle Newman: We appreciate the support of the New England First Coalition who publicly excoriated the baseless censorship. Thank you to our advisor Beth Fialko Casey for being just the best every day. We love and appreciate you more than you know. Ultimately we thank the reporters around New England and the country who shared our story. It worked. Yesterday, we broke the news that our director of guidance's license had been revoked by The Vermont Agency of Education and we were not censored.

Halle Newman: We are often in awe of all of the hard work and accomplishments of everybody here in this room. You inspire us. Thank you.

Janet Wu: Congratulations. Congratulations. So all these editors of The Register are certainly impressive. They are not unique. NEFAC is hearing more and more similar experiences of young journalists breaking ground and defending the First Amendment, so today we're announcing an Emerging Journalists Award beginning in 2020. This will be open to new reporters, student reporters, and I suspect we'll get lots of nominations. So spread the word and we're hoping you'll be our resources for future groups to be getting this award and encouraging others to break ground like the editors of The Register.

Janet Wu: Our next award is the Antonia Orfeld Citizenship Award. The honor this year goes to David Saad, president of Right to Know New Hampshire. This is given to New Englanders who have fought for information crucial to the public's understanding of its government. Mr. Saad's work includes the formation of Right to Know, drafting legislation to strengthen the state's Right to Know Law, and he has been a champion of open government in New Hampshire. He could not be with us here today but Carla Gericke who works with Mr. Saad at Right to Know is here to accept the award on his behalf. Carla.

Carla Gericke: Thank you to the New England First Amendment Coalition for recognizing David Saad with the Antonia Orfeld Award today. I'll be reading his remarks. The New Hampshire Constitution has an article specific to its citizen's right to open government. Part 1 Article 8 states, all power residing originally in and being derived from the people, all the magistrates and officers of government are their substitutes and agents and at all times accountable to them. Government, therefore, should be open, accessible, accountable and responsive. To that end, the public's right of access to governmental proceedings and records shall not be unreasonably restricted.

Carla Gericke: This is known in New Hampshire as the Right to Know Law. David's fight for greater government transparency began in 2011, when he became embroiled in a right of way property dispute with the Romney School District, who filed a court injunction to keep David from constructing a 12-foot travel way to his home.

Carla Gericke: After a legal battle that lasted several years, David was able to make the necessary improvements to his right of way, while his battle was a property rights fight and not a right to know issue, he used the Right to Know Law to gain access to public records. David's blog, [romneynewhampshire.wordpress.com](http://romneynewhampshire.wordpress.com), chronicles his multi-year battle and he's struggled to hold the school board accountable.

Carla Gericke: This experience was David's call to action, to help others exercise their right to know. Fortunately he found other Granite Staters who were also fighting for greater government transparency. In 2013, David, Harriet Cady, David Taylor and others like me, formed Right to Know New Hampshire. Now as President of Right to Know New Hampshire, David and other members educate citizens and

public officials about the letter and spirit of the Right to Know Law through free statewide trainings and seminars.

Carla Gericke: Right to Know New Hampshire has become a resource for people and we regularly receive citizen's complaints from across the state. Last year, we received 68 inquiries, a 15% increase over 2017. In spite of Right to Know New Hampshire's efforts to uphold government transparency and accountability, a law is only as good as its enforcement mechanisms. The Right to Know Law leaves it entirely up to the individual citizen to enforce compliance and this enforcement in New Hampshire can only be done through the courts. To most of us, filing a lawsuit in court can be intimidating, time consuming, costly and it represents a significant barrier to exercising our right to know.

Carla Gericke: Public officials on the other hand, don't bear these burdens themselves. Instead they use tax payers' money to hire lawyers to fight against our right to know. This breeds a disincentive for public officials to resolve citizens' complaints outside the courts as David's legal battle has shown. In 2015, the Center For Public Integrity rated all 50 states on public access to information. New Hampshire received an F rating, the second lowest. A key factor in this was the lack of a formal appeal mechanism if you wanted to get the right to know.

Carla Gericke: David helped establish and served on a study commission, tasked with identifying alternatives to going to court. He researched how all 50 states handled their right to know complaints and presented those findings and he was one of the members tasked with writing the final report, published by the study commission and he helped draft the ombudsmen legislation.

Carla Gericke: The ombudsmen bill is currently being considered in the legislature and will create a low cost speedy and impartial grievance resolution process. Passage will go a long way to leveling the playing field for disputes over government transparency. If you reside in New Hampshire or know someone who does, please let your legislators know to support Senate Bill 313.

Carla Gericke: David also continues to fight for Granite Staters right to know in various other ways, working on bills, testifying before the legislature, trying to eliminate fees charged by the government to access and inspect public records and to close variously loop holes related to that, as well as teaching seminars and workshops. While many people have contributed to Right to Know New Hampshire's progress and achievements, David would like to especially thank David Taylor and Harriet Cady for their hard work and dedication to our mission. He would also like to thank all the members of Right to Know New Hampshire.

Carla Gericke: As James Madison explained centuries ago, "the right of freely examining public characters and measures, and a free communication among the people is the only effectual guardian of every other right. We are here today all fighting for this freedom, even when our government would prefer to hide the truth from us. Please join us in our fight to make New Hampshire's government more open,

accessible, and accountable, all government I would say. And take the first step by visiting our blog, [righttoknownewhampshire.org](http://righttoknownewhampshire.org). Thank you for your time. I know David is deeply honored.

Janet Wu: Thank you very much Carla and congratulations to David Saad. Next is our Michael Donoghue Freedom of Information Award which is going to the Hartford Courant this year. This goes to journalists most courageous in protecting or advancing the public's right to know. The Courant's fight to get information for its coverage of the 2012 shooting at Sandy Hook in Newtown, gave us all a clearer picture of the shooter. How to better prevent future massacres through mental health policies and gun laws. I present to you Andrew Julien who is the publisher and editor of the Hartford Courant.

Andrew Julien: Hi. Good afternoon. This is Dave Altimari who really was the point on this battle with the state police and the state of Connecticut over getting these documents. One of our lead writers covering the Sandy Hook massacre going back to the day of the shooting more than five years ago. I'm just going to tell you, a little personal story here. So on the morning of that day, we were gathered in the newsroom. We knew something had happened but we didn't know what and within about an hour of the first cry that something was wrong, Dave came up to me and he said I'm hearing that an entire classroom is unaccounted for.

Andrew Julien: I still get emotional repeating those words. They are not words you ever expected to hear and there was nothing that prepared myself or the journalists at the Courant that day to do the task we needed to do that day but we did and we told the stories we needed to tell and a lot of good journalists across both Connecticut and the region did the same. We cried after writing the stories. We hugged our children very closely that night.

Andrew Julien: And we walked away from that week determined to answer the question, what had happened here? How could something that had never, ever happened before happen? What source of depravity was at the root of this man's mind?

Andrew Julien: So this began a quest almost, a real campaign to get to the bottom of that question and I just, in addition to Dave, I want to note here that Courant reporters Josh Kovner and Alaine Griffin both worked tirelessly on this story, especially in the early years. I also want to thank Jeff Glasser who was our in house council. Is no longer with our part of the company but he's still out in Los Angeles. He was tireless in his efforts and Bill Fish of Hinkley and Alan who was our outside counsel who helped us work on this case.

Andrew Julien: So as we dug in and tried to answer that question, we ran into one barrier after another. We won't go through the whole litany but it took five years. It took a state Supreme Court ruling to get us the documents we wanted to get and with that Dave and Josh wrote a tremendously powerful piece. I hope you all have a chance to read it that really looked at what had happened here, what was in this person's mind and most importantly were there clues along the way that would

help something like this from being prevented from ever, ever happening again? So no one would ever have to hear the words an entire classroom is unaccounted for. We thank you for this.

Andrew Julien: This was a great honor. This was a long and sometimes really kind of lonely fight. So thank you for recognizing our work, it's greatly appreciated and on behalf of the entire Hartford Courant, thank you to Dave, thank you to the people who worked on this for so many years. Good afternoon.

Dave Altimari: Just real quick. Think about that: this was an FOI that took five years to get the documents. There were many times we could have stopped. We lost and a Superior Court judge threw our case out. To Andrew's credit, we never stopped. I don't know how much we spent on this case, frankly I don't want to know. We took five years. It was a lot of lawyers. A lot of meetings. The state police fought us every step of the way from the day that I submitted the FOI and they basically ignored it. They ignored it for almost a year before they finally acknowledged that they had the documents and they weren't going to give them to us. And that started the court fight.

Dave Altimari: And people ask me all the time, it's five years ago, why are you still fighting this? Why do you want to get those records? I would tell them to read the stories that we did about Adam Lanza. Because there are more people like Adam Lanza out there and the more we know about guys like Lanza and Breivick, Klebold and people like that, the more then we can stop the next one. So thank you very much.

Janet Wu: Congratulations to Andrew, David, the entire staff at the Hartford Courant and I have to tell you, we had some great candidates for this reward, but when the board voted I believe it was unanimous and you can understand why after hearing from both of the gentlemen. Our final award this afternoon is the Stephen Hamblett First Amendment Award. It is named after the late publisher of the Providence Journal and is given every year to someone who has spent their career promoting, defending and advocating for the First Amendment. Mr. Engelberg not only shares the first name, he even spells his first name the same way as the man who the award is named after, but more importantly, he has spent a lifetime fighting for information as editor of ProPublica, The Oregonian, and as a reporter and editor at The New York Times. Ladies and gentleman, please welcome our 2018 Stephen Hamblett Award honoree, Stephen Engelberg.

Steve Engelberg: Good afternoon. I'm told to be a little careful of the microphone. Can you hear me okay? First of all it's a great pleasure to be here to receive this award. I'd like to thank the Barr Foundation, WBUR, Boston University, The Globe, Providence Journal Charitable Legacy Fund, and the Robertson Foundation for underwriting this. I'd also like to say just sitting here that it's a great honor to be standing at the podium with such courageous fighters for the freedom of information. It is

incredibly inspiring to see high school students who were subject to an injustice like that and who stood up and said no and that is not acceptable.

Steve Engelberg: Of course the work of The Courant on this subject is amazing. One asks the question just listening to that story, how on Earth could it have taken five years and certainly you could point to stubbornness on the part of the government. But I do think there is something else going on which is that increasingly government agencies believe that the news business won't make these fights. That if we, the government spends money and time, the news business, so strapped that it is for cash will just back down and go away. So kudos for the Hartford Courant for not doing that.

Steve Engelberg: I'm afraid that in many cases, those FOI things are never filed anymore. If they are filed, they are not pursued because of the cost. I should say at the outset that it's also a great honor to be here, because I grew up not far from here. I'm from Lexington, Massachusetts. My brother Mike Engelberg still lives there. He's here today. Proud New Englander. Proud supporter of certain New England sports teams. Don't have to go into that.

Steve Engelberg: So I thought I would also talk a little bit, at the outset, just about my own history here because it does connect to this award. Forty-one years ago I was in college. I was the sports editor of the student paper. I had absolutely no intention of pursuing journalism as a career. I had this plan to attend graduate school and become a historian and in my junior year in about March, I asked one of my friends who seemed to have the newsprint running through their veins type, the people who know everything about the world of newspaper and journalism, what is this summer internship thing you guys are doing? They said oh yeah, that's something. Sure absolutely. They are really great, but you need to apply by December. They are all gone.

Steve Engelberg: Now, being both unknowledgeable and an inveterate optimist I said to myself, geez why not send out some letters? Who knows. Maybe something good will happen. There was a small problem beyond the fact that it was March not December and that is my so-called experience as journalist consisted entirely of writing stories about basketball, tennis, baseball and track and field. So I bundled together a few of my sports clips. I should say to the younger people in the audience, yes they are called clippings because once upon a time people took scissors and clipped them out of pieces of paper, a strange thing to do.

Steve Engelberg: Anyways, I sent my clippings off to various places that had internships with a cover letter that said — I had combined them with the two news stories I had ever written in my life — and I said to the editors that I had written a mixture of sports and news. It was a mixture.

Steve Engelberg: Anyways, a few weeks later unbelievably pitches up in my dorm a letter from the Providence Journal Bulletin as it was then called saying they would like to offer me a summer internship for \$278 a week which in 1978 was believe me, a

princely sum. And it was completely mind blowing and mystifying. I mean clearly somebody who actually knew what they were doing had dropped out, decided to go see the world. I don't know. I have absolutely no idea what possessed the Journal to hire the likes of me but there I was.

Steve Engelberg: So, summer came, I got in my completely broken down car. Drove from Lexington to Providence, reported to work, to the intern coordinator and I said, I guess I'm here to work in the sports department. He looked at me very quizzically. He said "sports is for stars. You're going to the West Warwick bureau." Which if you know Rhode Island, is an adventure.

Steve Engelberg: So I went to the West Warwick bureau and it really was one of the absolute best summers of my life. I covered night meetings, school board, fires, shootings. I remember vividly on day three I was told that I had to go to cover a school board meeting and get the story to the Evening Bulletin. There was such a thing as evening papers, by going to a phone booth and dictating the story at nine in the evening.

Steve Engelberg: And I said oh when do I write it? They said, you don't write it, you just sort of talk it. Just get on the phone. There's a dictationist. This was terrifying. Remember, this was my third news story. So, I went to the phone booth at the appointed hour and I started my thing and I uttered a sentence, a lede. It went on a little bit. Well in fact it went on for so long, the typist said no, no, no. I'm not going to type that. That's too long.

Steve Engelberg: So let the record reflect, it was my first sort of important news story at the Journal was rejected by the dictationist and she was right. Also had my first correction that summer. I managed to misspell one of the streets in West Warwick. The next morning the two guys who worked at the bureau came and absolutely chewed my head off, screaming at the top of their lungs, that no idiot intern was going to mess up their reputation for accuracy and I should put a GD map next to myself when I write stories.

Steve Engelberg: Everyone in West Warwick seemed to have stepped out of the pages of one of those great New England crime novels, honestly. I do recall one day, I was actually downtown and I had lunch with some of the more important reporters. And we were walking out of the building and it was the day the Rhode Island Supreme Court was releasing tapes that had been recorded by the FBI of conversations involving and this is the actual full name, this was his name in the newspaper, Reputed New England Crime Boss Raymond Patricarca. That was actually his name. That's the whole thing right there.

Steve Engelberg: So one of the reporters turned to the other and said, "Well what are these tapes going to show? What if it shows that the mob owns The Journal?" And I thought about that. I said wow what if the mob owns The Journal? But they didn't. A year later, I put off my graduate school plans. I had an acceptance, put it in a folder, headed off for a job at The New York Times Washington Bureau as a copy

boy. There was such things back in those days. And my duties included literally carrying pieces of paper from reporters with typewriters who would shout, "copy", and I would then carry it to the editors who edited it in pencil where it was then shouted "copy" again and taken back to a teletype room where a guy would actually type it onto a teletype and send it all to New York. Unimaginable.

Steve Engelberg: It is remarkable how far we have come since then. I was asked over lunch a question. Karen Bordeleau, former editor of the Providence Journal and I were just talking about editing. We were talking about writing and the question sort of arose, does writing get easier? And certainly I feel like I am a better writer than I was when I was standing in that phone booth at the Coventry School Board, but I don't believe personally that writing actually gets easier. The results get better. But the sweat and terror and agony of facing a blank screen and trying to be creative and trying to build something that no one has done and trying to improve upon what you've done before, at least for me after almost 40 years of doing this, remains incredibly tough.

Steve Engelberg: Writing is not easy. I guess I would say that if it were easy, a lot more people would do it well. So it's just worth remembering that we're all, whatever level of experience, because I know there's a lot of students in the room and you may be looking across at people you see and saying, well wow, they really have ... it's easy for them. They finally got there. No they haven't.

Steve Engelberg: Now as an editor, sometimes I'll get a piece of copy from reporters and I'll look at the opening paragraphs and I'll say well this doesn't really work. Let's try another approach and I'll give them an approach and they'll come back to me a couple of days later and I'll look at it and frown and say doesn't work either. They are very upset. They say but you told me to do this. This was your idea and now you're saying it doesn't work. I said yeah it clearly doesn't work. But how, but why? And I look at them and I say well clearly I'm not the Pope. Should I ever become infallible I'm sure you'll let me know but I'm struggling here like the rest of you to figure out how to do this, let's try it another way.

Steve Engelberg: So I just would say to the students here, as you're doing draft number six or seven, don't worry about it. So does everybody else. I never did get to study history but in preparation for this talk, I thought I would go back and look at a little history and to what I'm about to go into here, I owe a debt to Professor Lee Bollinger at Columbia, president of Columbia and also a noted First Amendment scholar who pointed this out first and think smartest.

Steve Engelberg: The First Amendment has been with us for centuries. So you would think that First Amendment Law is something that's been with us for centuries. That the Supreme Court of the United States has been all along the way. Andrew Jackson might have had a tough case there. Maybe Abe Lincoln had a moment. We had this sort of long line of established First Amendment Law that sort of cements what we can do. And that is entirely untrue. Point of fact, we are coming up on

an anniversary that I don't think anybody will celebrate, which is the 100 year anniversary of the Supreme Court's first three major First Amendment rulings.

Steve Engelberg: To wit, in 1917, when the United States enters World War I, there was some anti-war sentiment in the country. And so the Congress passed a law saying it's against the law to do or say anything that will impede the Selective Service, the drafting of soldiers. And so people do this. People try to impede the war effort shall we say through speech. In one case, three Philadelphia socialists, mail fliers to 15,000 men who were facing a call up, urging them to resist the draft. And a court said that this was illegal. They had to go to jail for 10 years.

Steve Engelberg: Amazingly enough, for the sending of fliers that question the American war effort, a unanimous Supreme Court led by the famous justice, Oliver Wendell Holmes, agreed. That you could restrict the speech of people who wanted to write fliers to people. After all this would be undermining the war effort as Congress said you couldn't do.

Steve Engelberg: I want to read you a couple of sentences from that opinion, because it's oft quoted but I think people forget the context. This is what Oliver Wendell Holmes said. "The most stringent protection of free speech would not protect a man falsely shouting fire in a theater and causing a panic. The question in every case is whether the words used are in such circumstances and are of such nature to create a clear and present danger that they will bring about the substitutive evils that Congress has a right to prevent. It is a question of proximity and degree."

Steve Engelberg: We've all heard that shout fire in a crowded theater thing. But I think people don't remember, there wasn't a fire. There wasn't a theater. It was a couple of leaflets. A week later, another case came up. Eugene V. Debs who had run for president of the United States as a socialist candidate, aware that this could be a problem, gives a speech in which he says, I know I can't go into too many specifics here because he knows the other guys are already in jail, but let me just say, war is not a great idea. The war is not a great idea.

Steve Engelberg: They charge him. Convict him. Ten-year sentence. The third case involved a Missouri newspaper publishing in the German language that said the war wasn't necessarily a good idea. Ten-year sentence, ruled by the Supreme Court. Three separate decisions. Each one. Yes indeed we can jail people for having opinions that might "threaten the war effort." So let's be clear, that's a trifecta. Court approved criminalizing publication of a newspaper, distribution of fliers and speech.

Steve Engelberg: So that's where it all began in the world of the First Amendment. And our legal protections. Now fortunately, there have been other decisions since then. And, probably some of you in the audience or many of you are very familiar with Times v Sullivan. The decision which shields journalists from legal jeopardy

provided they take appropriate care and do not knowingly publish false information.

Steve Engelberg: I think sometimes we American journalists forget what a truly mighty shield that decision is, Times v Sullivan. Because in essence what it says is we can pursue stories about public officials or prominent people, free from the threat of court action as long as we adhere to the most basic professional standards, even if we make a mistake. Now that standard is not world wide. Not at all.

Steve Engelberg: In 1998 I was working as the investigative editor at The New York Times. We were investigating the Mexican drug trade. We wrote a story that a very prominent member of the ruling party of Mexico pre-governor of the state of Sonora, was involved with drug traffickers. He didn't like that story. So he went to Mexico City and he got the federal government of the country of Mexico to file a criminal libel complaint against the two reporters. They were charged with a crime. And, I do recall asking the lawyer at The New York Times, okay well we got a problem here. So what are the elements of the offense?

Steve Engelberg: And he said well I'm not familiar with Mexican law. I'll have to check on that. Came back to me the next day and said that the element of the offense is under Mexican libel law — this is a law that is prevalent throughout the world, more countries than not have this — offending the dignity of a public official is a crime punishable by jail. That's Mexican law.

Steve Engelberg: Now we eventually got out of that. We persuaded them to drop the charges through various means but it is a remarkable thing to think about, that more countries than not in the world have that. So you know when we reflect upon sometimes the difficult moment that we're in in press relations with the government, it is worth remembering that Times v Sullivan stands as a tremendous bulwark against unbelievable horrible alternatives.

Steve Engelberg: I'd like to turn as a final couple of thoughts to what I do see as the most eminent threat to First Amendment today. No, it's not Donald Trump. Although he certainly is not helping things. Even as you walk in today, I was looking at Twitter and I saw that there was a press conference about the emergency that isn't an emergency and some guy from CNN, Jim Acosta, said but sir the numbers are the lowest since 1973, which they are. And he shouted, fake news. You're fake news. I have my own numbers.

Steve Engelberg: So that's where we are but I don't actually think that that in the long run is going to go down in history as the biggest threat to press freedom in America. What I see as the biggest threat is the economic one. As we all know, across the country, local papers are slashing staff, slashing coverage. The Boston Globe, with John Henry as its owner, remains a shining counter to this trend. But the situation elsewhere is truly dire.

Steve Engelberg: I looked this up the other day. In 1998, there were more than 400,000 people employed by newspaper across the country. Today, we're at 140,000 and dropping. A recent academic paper on this subject identified what the professors called news deserts, places that just no longer have a viable news outlet and they found that people there are more likely to vote a straight partisan line. Lacking information, readers, voters, seem to fall back on what they feel they can rely upon, which tribe they belong to. R, D, blue, red.

Steve Engelberg: At ProPublica, we have tried to address the question of news deserts in a little bit, small way, by creating what we call the local reporting network. Each year we're funding an investigative reporter. Paying their salary and benefits so that within the newsroom that they are already in, they can be free to pursue a major investigation. In the first year of this program, we had seven. This year we have 14. In year one, we received more than 150 proposals for which we picked seven.

Steve Engelberg: Now one of the reporters that had a successful winning proposal was from the Southbend Indiana Tribune. A shrinking but still feisty paper in the heartland. The reporter, Christian Sheckler, wrote to us that he believed that the police department in the neighboring town of Elkhart, Indiana, was worth looking into. There wasn't anybody else who was going to do this because about a decade earlier, the local paper, great name, The Elkhart Truth, had been sold and its staff whittled to a single person who had only the time to type up press releases.

Steve Engelberg: Christian had reason to believe from his sources that the local cops, prosecutors and even judges were doing a far less than honorable or stellar job. We gave him the grant. We actually were so impressed by the work, that we assigned one of the ProPublica full time reporters Ken Armstrong to work with him and things turned out to be far, far worse than any of us could have imagined.

Steve Engelberg: We filed public records requests which no one had done there in years for the police supervisors. The police department. There were 34 supervisors. When we got the records back, we discovered that 28 of the 34 supervisors had been punished for misconduct, ranging from theft, drunken driving, assault, you name it and no one in Elkhart had any idea.

Steve Engelberg: We wrote one of those Internet headline stories that sort of kind of sums it all up. It read like this. "Nearly all the officers in charge of an Indiana police department have been disciplined, including the chief who keeps promoting them." We kept digging. There was more. We obtained through public records request, a video tape, that showed cops brutally beating a handcuffed subject in the jail in front of a CC TV camera. The cops had a letter put in their jacket. Nothing more had happened, but after the story appeared, suddenly the local prosecutor brought criminal charges. The cops were fired.

Steve Engelberg: Ultimately after this and many more stories, the police chief was forced to resign. The mayor announced he wouldn't run for re election and the town invited a former US attorney in Indiana to prepare a public report in which she assessed and investigated the police practices in the town.

Steve Engelberg: The sad part about all this is that if Christian Shekler hadn't been suspicious of what was going on 45 minutes away from this newsroom and we hadn't been able to provide some help, it's entirely possible that none of this would have come to light. And that is a very serious problem and the question that I find myself haunted by is how many more Elkharts are there. And I wish I could say that I feel that they are the exception but I think as our colleagues at The Washington Post like to say democracy dies in darkness. I think there's something to that.

Steve Engelberg: Now economically the last two years have been positive for some publications. The New York Times has a record number of digital subscriptions. The Washington Post has brought in a lot of new people. For some strange reason, from November of 2016 to today, Propublica's budget has doubled. We went from 7,000 donors a year to 35,000. I don't know what happened in November of 2016, it must have been something interesting that changed. But this is not enough. This is not going to answer all of the questions that I think we face as a democracy in a country.

Steve Engelberg: I myself in my little town of Montclair, New Jersey, have just gone on the board of our local weekly, which is losing a ton of money. We're going to try to turn it into a non profit and raise money to keep it alive. I think a lot of communities are going to have to do the same thing and I'm not sure that's all going to be the answer. I think the future of journalism is going to involve more philanthropy and if we're honest fewer reporters in our towns and local communities.

Steve Engelberg: The First Amendment, as I've tried to suggest, particularly as its been interpreted thus far, by the more recent Supreme Court decisions is a very mighty sword. But we have to build an economic model that allows reporters to do what they do best and what the framers intended. We're not there yet but I must say looking at that group from Burlington High, I have hope. Thank you very much.