

Awards Ceremony • April 10, 2025 • Paley Center for Media • New York City

Collier awards

for ethics
in journalism

“Being surrounded by photographers, editors, and students who deeply care about ethics in journalism gives me faith for the future of the industry.”

Corinne Perkins

Reuters; Panelist, “Photojournalism Ethics” event, November 19, 2024

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Welcome

Welcome to the inaugural awards ceremony for the Peter F. Collier Awards for Ethics in Journalism.

With the generous support of Nathan S. Collier, we launched this program last fall as part of the Ethics and Journalism Initiative at New York University's Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute.

Over the following months, we were thrilled to receive more than 100 entries, works of journalism that were positively inspiring and that filled us with optimism about the future of our profession. We saw rigorous reporting that broke news and held powerful people to account, while also demonstrating consummate care for accuracy, fairness, empathy, and transparency.

The judges had a difficult task in choosing among multiple entries that fulfilled the goal of the Collier Awards: to celebrate acts of journalism that meet the highest ethical standards in the face of pressure or incentives to do otherwise. The strength of the work confirmed our belief that a greater focus on ethics — on rigorous, factual reporting, transparency, humility, and fairness — can help journalists become more effective and more trustworthy. This is particularly important in this era of disinformation and distrust.

We're also especially pleased to be highlighting skillful and ethical journalism by a new generation of reporters who are entering the field with extraordinary passion and commitment.

I want to thank our distinguished panel of judges — Dean Baquet, Sewell Chan, Gina Chua, Lynette Clemetson, Nancy Gibbs, Lynn Novick, Kerry Smith, Stephen D. Solomon, and Paul Steiger — for their hard work and their keen discernment in picking our winners. Their deliberations were a master class in informed and civil discourse.

As you leave tonight's event, I hope you will get to know NYU's Ethics and Journalism Initiative. In addition to administering the Collier Awards, we offer mentoring, workshops, events, and training, and share ethics news, resources, and best practices at ethicsandjournalism.org. For questions about the Collier Awards or the Ethics and Journalism Initiative, please visit our website or contact our managing editor, Ryan Howzell, at ryan.howzell@nyu.edu.

Thank you for being here, and congratulations to all our winners!

Best regards,

Founding Director
Ethics and Journalism Initiative

“Speaking at the *Covering Your Campus* panel was immensely valuable as a student journalist. I was given the opportunity to discuss some of the rigorous journalism and important ethical

conversations my colleagues and I have engaged in at the Washington Square News over the past year — and especially getting the chance to do so with professionals in the field was truly beneficial.”

Yezen Saadah

Panelist, “Covering Your Campus” event, February 12, 2025

Collier Awards Ceremony

Celebrating journalism that meets the highest ethical standards in the face of pressure or incentives to do otherwise.

Paley Center for Media
April 10, 2025 5:00–9:00 pm

5:00–6:00 pm

Arrivals and Refreshments

Mingle over light bites and beverages in the Paley Center Lobby.

6:00–7:30 pm

Presentation of Awards

Join us in the Bennack Theater as Collier Awards judges and other presenters name winners in the student, local, and national/international categories.

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Stephen J. Adler: founding director, Ethics and Journalism Initiative
Nathan S. Collier: founder, The Collier Companies

Student Category

Stephen D. Solomon: Collier judge; Marjorie Deane Professor of Journalism, New York University
Lynette Clemetson: Collier judge; director, Wallace House Center for Journalists, University of Michigan

Local Category

Sewell Chan: Collier judge; executive editor, *Columbia Journalism Review*
Dean Baquet: Collier judge; executive editor, Local Investigations Fellowship, *The New York Times*

Keynote Address

Dean Baquet

National/International Category

Ellen Horne, director, podcasting and audio reportage concentration, New York University Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute
Stephen J. Adler, founding director, Ethics and Journalism Initiative

7:30–9:00 pm

Reception

Celebrate, dine, and toast in the Paley Center Gallery.

The Symposium

A series of public conversations with the finalists in the student, local, and national/international categories about the ethical issues that arose in their reporting and that confront journalists more generally, with an emphasis on best practices in addressing these challenges.

Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute, 20 Cooper Square
April 11, 2025 10:00am–2:00pm

10:00–11:00 am

Sharing Your Decision-Making with Audiences and How Transparency Can Build Trust

The Washington Post: “Abused by the Badge,” an investigation of criminal cases against law enforcement officials charged with sexually abusing children

The New Yorker: In the Dark, an investigative podcast examining the killings of 24 civilians in Haditha, Iraq

NBC News, *The Guardian*, the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, and Arab Reporters for Investigative Journalism: “‘Kill Us or Send Us Home’: Amazon workers in Saudi Arabia say they were exploited by labor supply and recruiting firms”

11:15 am–12:15 pm

Fairness in Accountability Reporting

Mississippi Today: Continued coverage of state officials’ alleged misuse of federal welfare funds

Garrett Shanley: “‘Oath of Fealty’: How the University of Florida Forced Faculty Cooperation with a GOP-backed Civics Center”

Cathy Wang: An investigation into Johns Hopkins’ controversial real estate holdings

12:15–1:00pm

Lunch

1:00–2:00 pm

Minimizing Harm When Working With Vulnerable Sources

The Baltimore Banner: “This megachurch warned of hell. Then it concealed its own sins.”

Documented: “Fear Across Borders: Chinese Americans and the Shadow of Surveillance”

Ariane Luthi: “‘They Promised to Take Out Our Families’: The Afghans America Left Behind”

Collier Awards Finalists



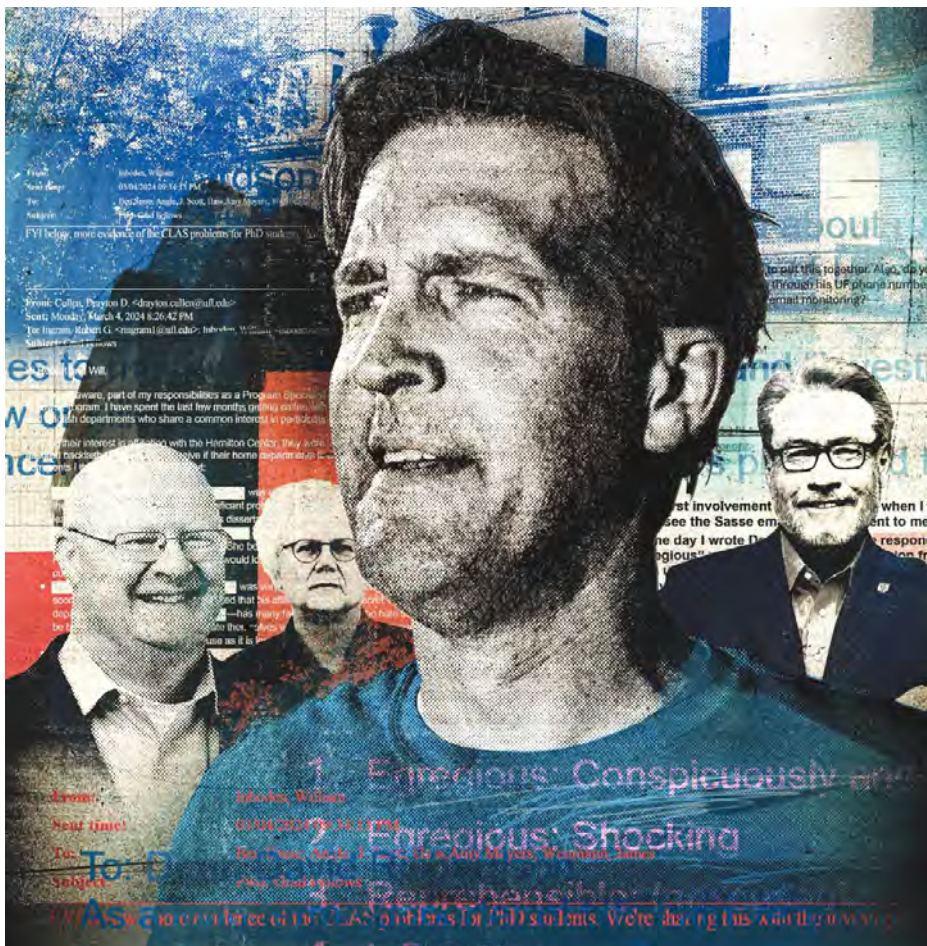
STUDENT REPORTING

Ariane Luthi

“They Promised to Take Out Our Families’: The Afghans America Left Behind”

For sensitivity in working with an Afghan war pilot who, despite the risk of Taliban retaliation, decided to forego confidentiality in a Foreign Policy story describing the plight of his family members marooned in Afghanistan

The lead source in Ariane Luthi’s powerful story about the United States’ failure to protect allies stranded in Afghanistan after the U.S. military withdrawal is an Afghan pilot who was on a mission to Uzbekistan when American soldiers pulled out of Kabul. He made it to the United States but his family, whom he last saw in 2021, remains stuck in Afghanistan despite American assurances that Afghan allies would receive expedited consideration for refugee visas. Luthi, a recent Columbia University alumnus, was aware that the pilot’s family could face retaliation from the Taliban if she told his story. The U.S. State Department also advised her not to use her sources’ real names. Luthi offered anonymity to the pilot, outlining the risk of speaking publicly, but he insisted on using his real name and identifiable details. Luthi decided the ethical course was to defer to her source’s fully informed choice.



STUDENT REPORTING

Garrett Shanley

“‘Oath of Fealty’: How the U. of Florida Forced Faculty Cooperation with a GOP-backed Civics Center”

For using sophisticated reporting techniques to protect confidential sources in an unflinching account of a high-stakes, politically charged showdown between faculty members and university administrators at the University of Florida

Four faculty members from the University of Florida talked to UF student Garrett Shanley about a high-stakes battle between faculty members and university officials over a new institute established on campus at the behest of Florida Republicans with ties to Governor Ron DeSantis. Given the perceived risks, only two of Shanley's sources agreed to be identified by name in his story, which ran in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Shanley employed sophisticated strategies to protect the identity of his confidential sources, including the use of Florida's freedom-of-information law to obtain a crucial email.



STUDENT REPORTING

Cathy Wang

An investigation into Johns Hopkins' controversial real estate holdings

For emphasizing the voices of residents affected by real estate development projects spearheaded by Johns Hopkins University

Johns Hopkins University and its real estate development partners have dominated official accounts of the school's expanding footprint in Baltimore. Cathy Wang, an editor for *The Johns Hopkins News-Letter*, sought out community activists, union leaders, and local residents to assess the impact of the university's ongoing expansion on communities where Johns Hopkins had bought up properties. Wang's article highlighted these community voices to support data-based evidence that Johns Hopkins failed to live up to promises it made to residents of neighborhoods touched by its development projects.



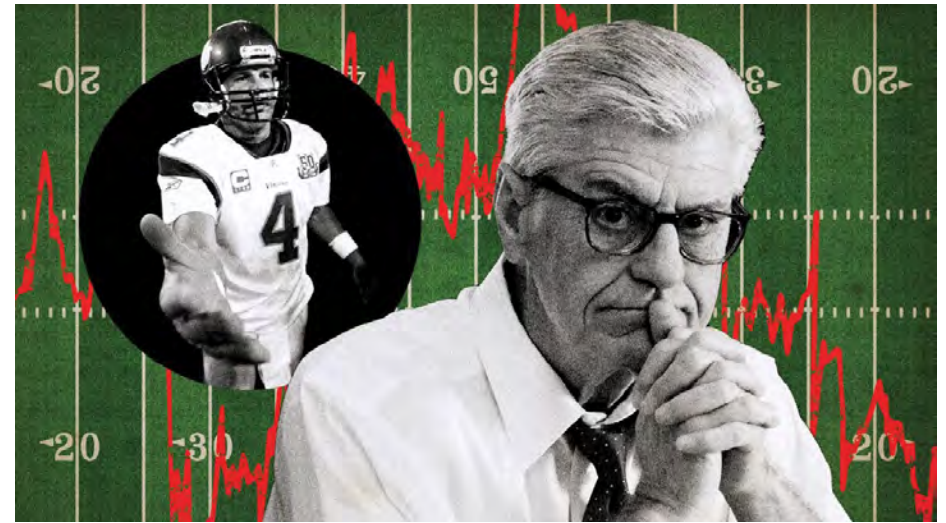
LOCAL REPORTING

Documented

“Fear Across Borders: Chinese Americans and the Shadow of Surveillance”

For insightful reporting on the pall cast on New York’s Chinese-American community by increased surveillance from both the U.S. and Chinese governments without taking sides on political divides within the community

Documented reporter Rong Qiaoqing chronicled the fear and suspicion that have taken root in New York’s Chinese-American community as deteriorating relations between the United States and China have prompted both governments to step up surveillance of Chinese migrants. Qiaoqing’s own reporting was affected by the threat of Chinese government surveillance of WeChat, the most popular communications app among her sources. *Documented* consulted with a security expert to protect its reporter and made sure sources knew of the risk of talking with her. To avoid false equivalencies, *Documented* declined to take sides on the divide within the community between those who support the Chinese government and those who oppose it, instead focusing on the impact that increased surveillance has had over the entire community, from one end of the political spectrum to the other.



LOCAL REPORTING

Mississippi Today

Continued coverage of state officials’ alleged misuse of federal welfare funds

For covering fallout from its prize-winning expose of Mississippi’s \$77 million welfare scandal, despite an ongoing lawsuit against Mississippi Today by a powerful ex-governor

More than a year after *Mississippi Today* published a Pulitzer Prize-winning expose about the misappropriation of \$77 million in federal welfare grants, former Mississippi governor Phil Bryant sued the nonprofit newsroom for defamation, citing comments made by *Mississippi Today*’s publisher and journalists after the Pulitzer announcement. Bryant’s lawsuit threatened to compromise the confidentiality of a *Mississippi Today* source who leaked the former governor’s text messages about the welfare funds — and put at risk the financial viability of the newsroom. *Mississippi Today* nevertheless continued to protect its sources and cover fallout from the welfare scandal, while maintaining its commitment to seeking fair comment from Bryant.



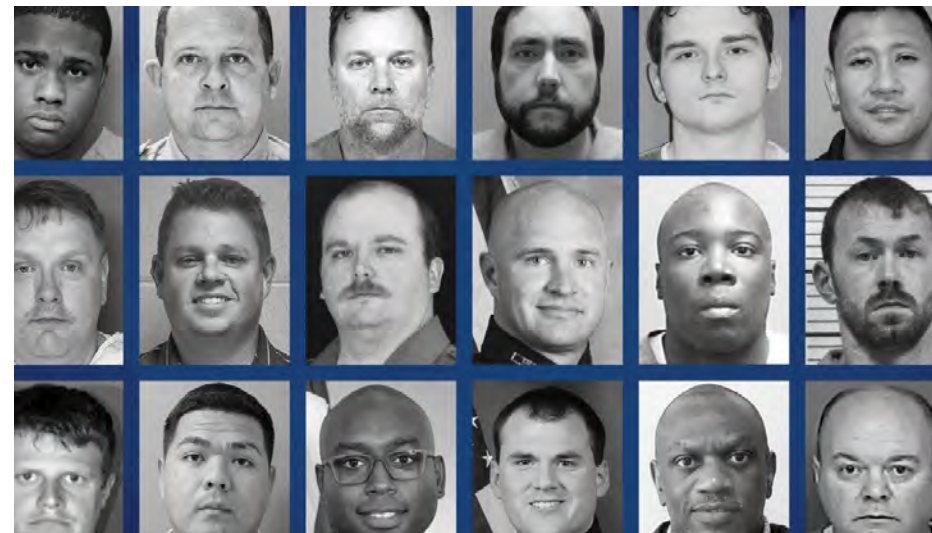
LOCAL REPORTING

The Baltimore Banner

“This megachurch warned of hell. Then it concealed its own sins.”

For winning the trust of sexual assault survivors who were raised to believe that criticizing church leaders was a sin that would lead to divine punishment

The Baltimore Banner's four-part series exposed decades of alleged sexual abuse and cover-up by officials of Greater Grace World Outreach Church, an international evangelical megachurch headquartered in Baltimore. The Banner's coverage focused on a group of survivors who had been raised in the church but quit the congregation and began investigating sex abuse by church officials. Members of the survivors' group were initially reluctant to speak on the record, but the Banner spent months building trust by allowing survivors to set the pace and tone of interviews and assuring that sources who agreed to be identified were aware of the potential consequences. Before publishing, Banner journalists traveled to Maine and Virginia to confront church leaders in person.



NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL REPORTING

The Washington Post

“Abused by the Badge”

For protecting the most vulnerable of sources in a powerful investigation of 1,800 criminal cases against law enforcement officials charged with sexually abusing children

Washington Post journalists spent two years analyzing data and examining court records to produce the *Post's* multipart series, but the heart of the project is searing accounts from the children who survived these crimes — the most vulnerable of sources. At every step of the reporting process, reporters Jessica Contrera and Jenn Abelson and photographer Carolyn Van Houten, while amassing ample on-the-record evidence, took extraordinary care to protect the privacy and dignity of these young survivors and their families. The journalists empowered these sources to make fully informed decisions about how much of their identity to reveal and assured that survivors and their families were prepared for their stories to be told publicly. *The Post's* series was a model of transparency; it featured a story detailing responses it received from the hundreds of law enforcement officers and agencies it named, as well as an additional piece explaining to readers how *Post* journalists approached the ethical challenge of reporting on children who survived sex crimes.



NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL REPORTING

NBC News, *The Guardian*, the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, and Arab Reporters for Investigative Journalism

“‘Kill Us or Send Us Home’: Amazon workers in Saudi Arabia say they were exploited by labor supply and recruiting firms”

For reporting on the exploitation of hundreds of Amazon workers in a manner that maintained the confidentiality of sources while also affording the company a robust opportunity to respond

Through interviews with dozens of current and former Amazon workers in Saudi Arabia, this international consortium of journalists exposed illegal recruiting fees, squalid living conditions, and potential labor trafficking by Nepalese agencies with contracts to supply Amazon with employees in the Gulf region. NBC, *The Guardian*, and their partners carefully balanced the confidentiality of vulnerable workers against the journalism imperative to confirm sources' accounts with documents, photographs, and, at a relatively early stage of their reporting, Amazon itself. Amazon eventually agreed to pay nearly \$2 million in reparations to about 700 workers.



NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL REPORTING

The New Yorker

In the Dark

For reporting with humanity, care, and dignity on Iraqi victims of a U.S. war crime

Nearly 20 years after a small group of U.S. Marines killed 24 civilians in the Iraqi town of Haditha, *The New Yorker* worked closely with Iraqi survivors to uncover the truth about the notorious shooting, for which no U.S. soldier served prison time. The magazine's nine-part podcast not only presented conflicting accounts of the massacre from Iraqi witnesses and the U.S. military but set out to determine whose version was backed by evidence. Additionally, after *The New Yorker*, with support from survivors in Haditha, sued the U.S. government to obtain more than 100 secret photographs that proved the shooting was a war crime, journalists handled the grisly images with sensitivity: They recognized that survivors had a right to see the unnerving photographs — but only to the extent each survivor chose to revisit the traumatic day through the newly uncovered evidence. *New Yorker* journalists followed a similar procedure when sharing other new information with survivors, including direct accounts from Marines, and assumed a high degree of care when deciding what to ultimately publish. While *New Yorker* journalists believed that publishing photos would back their contention that soldiers killed unarmed women and children, they did not want to violate victims' privacy. In the end, the magazine published only 10 photographs — and only after obtaining permission from victims' families.

“The value of the Collier Awards goes well beyond professionals. They provide compelling case studies that can be used in journalism courses throughout the

country, helping the next generation of reporters and writers better understand the difficult ethical decisions they will face in the years ahead.”

Stephen D. Solomon

Marjorie Deane Professor of Journalism, New York University and Collier Awards Judge

About the Ethics and Journalism Initiative

Founded in November 2023, the Ethics and Journalism Initiative at the Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute at New York University works to produce stronger, more sure-footed journalists who are prepared to tackle complex ethical challenges with skill, humanity, and intelligence.

We take a leadership role in advancing ethical standards and practices to foster more trustworthy journalism in the public interest.

We help in concrete ways:

1. **Fostering public conversations** on the most pressing issues
2. **Providing one-on-one ethical guidance** and workshops for student journalists
3. **Creating an opportunity for journalists** and those who care about ethics and journalism to share concerns and to help chart improvements across the field
4. **Aggregating resources** such as newsroom ethical codes, AI guidelines, and ethical “best practices” on our website
5. **Administering the Peter F. Collier Awards** for Ethics in Journalism

OUR NEXT INITIATIVE

Newsroom Training Pilot

An increased focus on ethical journalism is especially urgent in today's climate of public skepticism and official mistrust. But it's increasingly difficult for cash-strapped newsrooms to provide ethics training on their own. To fill this urgent need, we are developing a program of workshops and discussion modules to provide ethics guidance to newsrooms across the country, from nonprofit startups to established outlets.

**FALL 2023****Covering Politics Ethically and Robustly in an Age of Polarization and Disinformation.**

Panelists: Wesley Lowery, ex-CBS News and *The Washington Post*; Jay Rosen, press critic; Lydia Polgreen, *The New York Times*; Nancy Solomon, New Jersey Public Radio.

How to Get the Most Value From AI While Minimizing Risks of Errors, Deep Fakes, and Lost Trust From Public.

Panelists: Hilke Schellman, assistant professor, New York University; Amanda Barrett, vice president of standards, The Associated Press; Mo Tamman, investigative reporter, Reuters.

In Conversation: Marty Baron, former executive editor, *The Washington Post*.

SPRING 2024

AI News That's Fit to Print. Zach Seward, editorial director of AI Initiatives, *The New York Times*.

Security Training for Journalists on the Ground. Panelists: Jason Reich, vice president of safety, The New York Times Company; Gina Chua, executive editor, *Semafor*.

Privacy, News Judgment, and Corporate Ownership in Editorial Decisions: Business Insider/Bill Ackman/Neri Oxman.

Facilitator: Nabiha Syed, executive director, Mozilla Foundation; ex CEO, *The Markup*.

FALL 2024**Received Hacked Info? Now What?**

Panelists: Ben Smith, editor, *Semafor*, ex-*New York Times* media columnist; Kathleen Carroll, ex-executive editor, The Associated Press; Sewell Chan, executive editor, *Columbia Journalism Review*.

In Conversation: Dr. Jon LaPook, "Ethics of Medical Reporting," chief medical correspondent, CBS News.

Reporting the Empire City: Ethical Reporting on Crime and Police. NYU Professor Chenjerai Kumanyika, *Crooked Media*.

Covering Immigration: Reporting Across Language, Cultural Divides. Panelists: Mazin Sidahmed, *Documented*; Jonathan Blitzer, *The New Yorker*; Mica Rosenberg, ProPublica; Gwynne Hogan, *The CITY*, WNYC.

Photojournalism Ethics: Tips from the Pros. Panelists: Corinne Perkins, Reuters; Victor Blue, independent; Sandra Stevenson, *The Washington Post*; Julie Jacobson, The Associated Press.

Journalist Safety & Security. Workshop led by Kerry Paterson, director of global safety, risk, and resilience, The Associated Press.

SPRING 2025

Covering Your Own Campus: Legal and Ethical Considerations for Student Journalists. Workshop co-hosted with First Amendment Watch, featuring Stephen D. Solomon, First Amendment Watch; Sheila Coronel, Columbia Journalism School; Yezen Saadah, *Washington Square News*.

Ethics of Overseas Reporting: A Collaboration with the Overseas Press Club of America. Panelists: Azmat Khan, director, Simon and June Li Center for Global Journalism; Victor Blue, independent; Aida Alami, Columbia Journalism School.

Top left: "Photojournalism Ethics" panel, November 19, 2024. Top right: "Received Hacked Info? Now What?" panel, September 18, 2024.

About the Collier Awards

The Peter F. Collier Awards for Ethics in Journalism celebrate journalism by student and professional journalists that meets the highest ethical standards in the face of pressure or incentives to do otherwise.

The awards are administered by the Ethics and Journalism Initiative at the Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute at New York University. This is the inaugural year of the awards; they will be granted annually.

Collier Ethics in Journalism Awards
Categories:

- A \$5,000 award or scholarship for ethical work by a high school, college, or graduate student (\$500 for second place, \$250 for third place)
- A \$10,000 award for ethical work by a local journalist with regional significance (\$1,000 for second place, \$500 for third place)
- A \$15,000 award for ethical work by a professional journalist or team with national or international impact/significance (\$2,500 for second place, \$1,000 for third place)

Entrants were asked to describe how they dealt ethically and effectively with at least three of the following issues they confronted in their work, as well as any challenges they faced:

- Minimizing harm to sources, subjects, or others in the community
- Determining whether and how to identify sensitive sources
- Balancing privacy considerations with the imperative to disclose information in the public interest
- Providing a fair opportunity to respond and upholding the “no-surprises rule,” despite the risk of losing exclusivity or triggering a pre-publication attack on the story
- Ethically deploying data or artificial intelligence
- Avoiding false equivalency when the factual bases for opposing views are unequal
- Providing transparency to the news consumer about the ethical choices that went into the reporting of the story



The Collier Awards trophy was designed by Piotr Woronkowicz, an award-winning industrial designer and partner at Pentagram. Each trophy was fabricated and hand-finished at Machine Histories in Los Angeles, California.

Collier Awards Judges

Dean Baquet

Executive Editor, Local Investigations
Fellowship
The New York Times

Sewell Chan

Executive Editor
Columbia Journalism Review

Gina Chua

Executive Editor
Semafor

Lynette Clemetson

Director
Wallace House Center for Journalists
University of Michigan

Nancy Gibbs

Director
Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and
Public Policy
Harvard University

Lynn Novick

Documentary Filmmaker

Kerry Smith

Vice President, Ethics and Standards
ABC News

Stephen D. Solomon

Marjorie Deane Professor of Journalism
Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute
New York University

Paul Steiger

Founder Emeritus
ProPublica

About Nathan S. Collier

Nathan S. Collier, founder and chairman of The Collier Companies, is sponsoring the awards in honor of his great grand uncle, Peter F. Collier, who emigrated from Ireland in 1866, became a book publisher, and founded the renowned magazine, *Collier's Weekly*, in 1888.

In addition to building and running the Gainesville, Florida-based Collier Companies, which develops, manages, and owns multi-family housing, Collier has endowed a highly ranked real-estate master's program at the University of Florida's Warrington College of Business. He is an adjunct professor at UF's Levin College of Law, where he previously earned his law degree. Collier supports accountability journalism through membership on boards, including the Board of Overseers of the *Columbia Journalism Review*; awards programs; and endowments.

"Trust is the foundation of good journalism, both in the reader's trust in accuracy and the source's trust in discretion and fairness," Collier said. "Trust in turn flows from strong ethical standards consistently upheld. The goal of the Peter F. Collier Awards for Ethics in Journalism is to maintain and uphold ethical standards in the journalistic profession and thereby help create a better world for all."



“In these perilous times, it is essential to recognize these honorees’ steadfast commitment to honest, accurate journalism, and to treating their subjects with respect.”

The Collier Awards are presented by the Ethics and Journalism Initiative, a project of the Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute at New York University.

Our Mission

The Ethics and Journalism Initiative at New York University works to produce stronger, more sure-footed journalists who are prepared to tackle the many complex ethical challenges facing journalists today and in the future.

Through mentoring, workshops, training materials, public events, and collaborations with newsrooms and other academic institutions, EJI aims to ensure that every journalist we reach learns to meet such challenges with skill, humanity, and intelligence.

By advancing ethical practices in the profession, the Initiative works to foster the trustworthy journalism that is vital to the preservation of truth telling and democracy.

Statement of Journalistic Values

1. Honest fact-finding, regardless of where the facts lead.
2. Skepticism without cynicism.
3. A commitment to challenging false statements and narratives, wherever they arise.
4. A conviction that journalists play a vital role in democracy by holding governments and other powerful institutions to account.
5. A commitment to fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion in the practice of journalism.

Our Team

Stephen J. Adler, *Founding Director*

Alison Frankel, *Senior Advisor*

Ryan Howzell, *Managing Editor; Manager, Collier Awards*

ethicsandjournalism.org