

REALTIME FILE
MIF
ANNUAL FORUM-(ZOOM)
JUNE 16, 2020

CART CAPTIONING* PROVIDED BY:
ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION SERVICES, LLC**
www.CaptionFamily.com

* * * * *

This is being provided in a rough-draft format. Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) is provided in order to facilitate communication accessibility and may not be a totally verbatim record of the proceedings

* * * * *

>> Hello everyone. I'm Vince Stehle, Executive Director of Media Impact Funders and I would like to welcome you to our current installment of the media impact forum. Today is the daily planet, environmental journalism around the world. And we do have a whirlwind tour of a variety of environmental journalism projects from the local and regional activities that you're going to hear about in the first segment, to some larger initiatives covering national and international activities and internalism. So we are really running the gamut and you will see that we have a cast of thousands to talk about these projects today. And really every one of them could deserve a full hour but together we are going to touch on a bunch of different approaches in this first hour together. Then at the end of the hour we are going to have a question and answer session Q and A where we invite you to offer your questions comments what have you.

So just to invite you on the logistics of it, you will find a Q and A button at the bottom of your screen. You can offer a question anytime during the next hour and we will come back to you and invite you to present the question and the half hour to follow. So to begin with we are going to turn to some local and regional activities. And for that I am inviting Norris West, who is the director of strategic communications for the Annie E Casey foundation and also a board member of Media Impact Funders, I'm pleased to say. He has a long career in journalism, which began here in Philadelphia. As a Philadelphia native he got his start here and then went on to great work at the Baltimore Sun as well and recently has been working in philanthropy. So Norris is going to lead the first discussion and then we will come back after that. Thank you, Norris.

>> Thank you Vince. I'm delighted to be here today at the media impact form. As all of you know environmental journalism can make a lasting impact on the public understanding of our planet and policy decisions at the local, state, regional, national and international levels but here as Vince said we are going to focus on some activities that are happening on the local and regional levels. So you're going to hear about some

journalism projects that have managed to lift up some issues that are important to residents who live in watersheds and folks who live in places where climate change is an even greater factor. So I am delighted to have here three outstanding presenters. We have Rafael Lorente, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Philip Merrill College of Journalism, University of Maryland, Joseph Lichterman Manager of editorial and digital strategy, Lenfest Institute for Journalism, Melissa Davis Vice President of Strategic Communications & Informed Communities, Gates Family Foundation. Welcome to all three of you. Let's start with Rafael. Rafael, your project looked at the disparate impact climate has on many city neighborhoods, code red, Baltimore's climate [indiscernible] give us an overview of code red and tell us what it found.

>> Sure, thank you for having me. Code red is the product of the Harvard Center for investigative journalism with a generous grant from the Scripps foundation and the mission of the center is to do real world journalism with students to teach students while doing real world journalism into it in both a collaborative and innovative way. The first project, code red, was done in conjunction with National Public Radio, the University of Maryland capital new service, WMAR in Baltimore and wide angle youth media. The project that started when two of the faculty wanted to look into whether we could show that climate change specifically temperature increases in temperature were having a disproportionate effect on the poor especially, the urban poor, in places like Baltimore. So in Baltimore we used available ground to sensor data as well as some small sensors that our students built, with a little help from the school of engineering because we are journalists, and we place to those sensors, we asked folks to place the sensors in their homes, places like living rooms, children's bedrooms upstairs particularly in rural houses in Baltimore. And those temperatures allowed us to track both temperature and humidity over time. What we found probably doesn't surprise a lot of folks. We were able to show that average temperatures in poor neighborhoods in Baltimore were eight, 10 sometimes more degrees Fahrenheit hotter in the summer than they were in wealthier neighborhoods. In July during one of the hottest weeks if not the hottest week of the year last year, one of our sensors show that the temperature plus humidity, the ambient temperature outside one night was 102 degrees. inside in a residence home it was 113. I could come up with about 17 versions of those examples, including rooms where kids slept and so forth. We also used portable sensors, handheld sensors to show crazy numbers like a sidewalk outside someone's home was 118° when they walked outside or the hood of a car 167°... Or 164°. The data journalists also worked with NPR to nationalize the data. So NPR used satellite data to look at 97 cities across the country to see is Baltimore an outlier here, or is this fairly common, and in fact the pattern held almost in every city that we looked at. Poor neighborhoods were dramatically hotter than wealthier ones. In Baltimore and elsewhere one of the main culprits is a tree cover or lack thereof. The wealthier areas tend to have much denser tree cover which at least ameliorates the heat issues. Other factors including housing stock, cities like Baltimore Philadelphia, other cities have a lot of attached row homes with very dark roofing material. So what you get is a lack of air flow between homes, dark roofing material that absorbs heat and a lack of tree cover to mitigate either of the

first two. Those really made a difference. But in a nutshell lots of concrete, less tree cover makes cities like Baltimore get hotter and get hotter faster and stay hotter longer, which is also part, there's no relief at night. The cities say very very hot. That people are generally sicker, poorer and have fewer resources to cope and what we found is that means more hospitalizations for kidney disease, heart disease, diabetes and other issues. There's also plenty of evidence that diabetes medicine, medications for mental health, for mental illness and other problems do not work as well. And it means that pregnant women are more likely to have children who are born with more complications more health issues, the kind of things that lead to lifelong problems. Thanks to Scripps, on a park and others we were able to really spend a lot of time looking at disparities and disproportionality's in a way that newsrooms these days don't always have the time and the funding to do. And that's really the mission of the center to look at disparities in particular and look for places where we can show them fingers crossed sometime in the next few days we will have a homelessness and criminalization of homelessness project out, but that was... That was our 2019

>> Thank you, Rafael. I'm sure we will be coming back to you. Want to go next to Joseph. Joseph your reporting focused on rivers and watersheds, some important rivers and watersheds that touch the lives of millions of people. So could you tell us a little bit about the collaborative, the reporting collaborative that went into looking at the Ohio River, the Delaware River and what you found?

>> Yeah, thank you so much. Just going to share my screen really quick to show some of the great work that came out of this. So together with the Lenfest Institute where I work with the National Geographic society and William Institute supported two initiatives covering the Delaware watershed which spans from upstate New York down through the Delaware Bay and the Atlantic Ocean, the Ohio River watershed which goes from Pittsburgh West to the Mississippi River. And the idea was to combine the on the ground know how and in-depth local knowledge of local reporters with the immense visual knowledge and resources of the National Geographic Society. They are able to produce incredible visual journalism that we all know National Geographic for. So I want to share a couple examples of the work. The Delaware River watershed project is anchored by the Philadelphia Inquirer and included 10 other organizations. They all published their stories on a collaborative website. But we were able to leverage the National Geographic resources in an interesting way. So these photos are from last summer, a project called photo camp, which National Geographic runs all over the world but they work together with photographers at the Philadelphia Inquirer and brought in outside photographers who have told stories all over the world, to teach students in Philadelphia how to use photography for storytelling. So they spent a week running a camp for students and then were able to publish these stories as it related to how the communities related to water and the natural beauty around Philadelphia to share that with the wider community. Similarly, the reporting in the Delaware watershed has spanned the headwaters in your covering topics like commerce and recreation, to the Delaware Bay, where the story was a collaboration between the public radio station

WHYY and the new sternal reporting on invasive species of reeds and how that climate change is affecting those. Moving on to the Ohio River watershed this project was anchored by the, good River was anchored by public sorts which is a nonprofit newsroom in Pittsburgh involving seven newsrooms that spanned the watershed so what you are looking at here is a screenshot of an interactive map that was created in partnership with National Geographic that identified interesting points along the river that people may not have known about, and helping people throughout the watershed to better understand their surroundings. Some other stories that I thought were particularly evocative included a photo essay of the black experience throughout the watershed and the commercial and industrial legacy of the Ohio River watershed. And what that means as well as a video of Native American activists who kayaked the 300 mile length of the river to illustrate and draw some awareness to issues around preservation. So I'm going to stop sharing my screen. But effectively the goal of the project was to help bring reporters together to share resources and highlight some of the larger issues. And hopefully build a framework for future collaboration. Maybe we don't always realize or pay the most attention to it.

>> Thank you, Joseph. Melissa, your project the Gates family foundation and some other founders looked at Western waters, the Colorado, certainly an important River. Can you talk a little bit about your project and the collaboration that made it happen?

>> Yeah sure. And I just want to give all the credit really to the Walton family foundation, which really took the initiative to put this together. We have been longtime partners with [the Altons] and funding water in the West and programmatic funders. And they, through some work initiated by Justin Kenney and also Ted Kowalski, were looking at ways to support the communication of some of the innovation that they were seeing, both in the program side and the policy realm. And so wanted to support some more storytelling and local journalists and national journalists and focusing similar tension on water in the West. So this was an initiative that they started at CU Boulder the Center for environmental journalism. The purpose of the water desk is to provide support for journalists through funding media outlets get grants so that they can write stories with a focus on the Colorado River basin in the Western North America.

They are also producing original news and content that journalists can use. They serve as a hub for things like photography. They offer resources to journalists like data visualization, sometimes water, the issues around water are difficult storytelling for generalists that a lot of the no gold newsrooms especially. So to provide a lot of those types of resources and also education and engagement. So, working with CU Boulder students and others be on the campus to and from the public and policymakers about water. So the model for this is pretty interesting and innovative I think too, how they set it up. They did it with a relatively modest grant, I would say, to CU Boulder, significant, but doable if others in the audience are thinking about doing something like this in your area. They hired a veteran journalist named Mitch Tobin, who runs the water desk. And serves as a really credible voice. Among fellow journalists. They have a number of grant

programs one, they just did their first round of grants in late 2019. They had 11 grantees that gave \$10,000 each. It was a competitive grant program where a panel made the decisions so five so far have published their work and Mitch tells me there are six still in progress. There have been some delays due to Covid, but they have published articles from national publications, National Geographic and the weather channel, all the way down to the Arizona public media, the Colorado Sun and Cal matters. So they are able to address a lot of levels of reporting with the funding and I want to also mention that the Bechtel foundation just recently made a grant of about 150,000. And so they were able to pool funding and use resources of the water desk and Mitch to create a round of grants focus on California.

So it's also a nice vehicle for funders that want to do place-based funding. That is something that myself and our water grant officer, Russ, we are looking at funding some Colorado specific reporting, managed by the water desk. They also do micro-grants. So, just one to 2000 for reporters to do travel and go to conferences and educate themselves on kind of thorny water issues and they also are doing things like they have a really unique funding partnership with a local journalist, Brent Gardner Smith who really does deep dive coverage of a lot of the water issues around the water table around Colorado. And he has a nice distribution network across other outlets. So newspapers throughout Colorado often pick up his journalism. So it is a really I would say very efficient way for water, funders who are interested in water and seeing policy and public education advance. And yeah. I think the other nice thing about it just as someone we at the Gates foundation Colorado media project is doing a similar thing across the geographical area and if I could just say one thing about it it is a nice way for funders to come together to kind of solve these really difficult issues, the lack of capacity that the industry itself is facing by providing journalists not only with the tools but also with education and some grant funding to really sustain their work. So I really liked that about the model, that it really does provide direct funding to the journalists who are doing the work and uncovering these really important issues.

>> Thank you Melissa. I do know all of you will stick around for the Q and A afterward and I think we are just about out of time and I know at some point we will get a chance to hear what the public response has been to these three wonderful projects. But for now, I think I will turn it back over to Vince.

>> Thank you very much, Norris and all your panelists. A fascinating set of different approaches and I think it's a great reflection of what particular foundations can support in their local and regional initiatives. And the implications that these activities have for wider work as well, some of them being replicated more broadly. Now we are going to shift to kind of a flip side of that, of one initiative that has brought in hundreds of collaborating partners, and this is the work of covering climate now, and in partnership with one of their first major partners, the Guardian. So Mark Hertsgaard, Executive Director, Covering Climate Now, which received major support from the Shuman media Center as well as support from the David and Lucille Packard foundation and Mark is a

longtime environmental journalist covering climate for over 30 years also a book author in the environment but also you may know him as the author of a well-known book on the Beatles, a day in the life, probably his most popular work. But today he's going to talk about the environment and the work of covering climate now, which is the partnership of the nation and the Columbia journalism review where his partner in crime on this one is Kyle Pope, over there at the CCR. And so Mark Hertsgaard, can you tell us a little about what you're trying to accomplish with the collaboration, how you got this started and what you're trying to do there?

>> Sure Vince it is so good to be with you and everyone here at Media Impact Funders. It is a real welcome change frankly from a lot of people in philanthropy to be with people who understand the central role of the news media in creating social change. And I'm also very glad to be here with my colleagues at the Guardian who will be speaking shortly and also my colleagues at news, Al Roker we began covering climate precisely because we felt that the media coverage of the climate crisis was very poor. Especially here in the United States and we are running out of time. The project began after the famous 1.5° report by the United Nations IPCC in October 2018, which said we only had 12 years now down to 10 years to cut emissions in half in order to preserve a livable planet essentially. And the scientist said this will require transformative change in the economic sector, the financial sector, the agricultural sector, and they left out the obvious sector. The media sector. And that was when I called Kyle at CJR and said we need to do something because essentially if we don't radically transform the media sector, none of those other sectors will transform in time to arrest the climate crisis. I think people have not yet realized just how late in the day this is. One of the scientists who I think is the premier climate scientist in the world right now, Michael Mann of Penn State says this coming election in November is the make or break moment. That if Donald Trump were to win another four years in office it would be to quote Dr. Mann, game over for the climate. So we are working very hard to get that message across to the American public through the media. We are different from a lot of previous efforts in this regard in two ways. And I think this accounts for our success. We now have over 400 news outlets around the world with a combined audience approaching 2 billion people. We have all but one of the largest news agencies in the world. We have Reuters, we have Agents France and Blumberg and they in turn supply content to 2000+ newsrooms. So I say around 2 billion people it could be more than that. It is hard to say. And what makes us different is for one thing, we are organized by journalists for journalists. And as a result, our fellow journalists in the rest of the media listen to us in a way that frankly they will never listen to outsiders. Because we as journalists are constantly being bombarded by people trying to influence our coverage whether they be governments, PR agencies, activists, businesses. So we tend to have our hands up like that, but as fellow journalists they listen to us especially because we have the imprimatur of the Columbia journalism review behind us and Pulitzer prizes which usually guarantees that at least her email gets returned by people. The second thing that makes us different, and this is probably quite interesting to the people, the hunters on this call, we are very explicitly trying to work with mainstream news organizations.

We have many many of the progressive independent news organizations. I have been a correspondent for the nation for many years. We have democracy now. We have mother Jones. We have all the usual suspects and they've done a great job over the last 10+ years on the climate. I think we in the independent press have been covering the climate story pretty darn well given our lack of resources. That is not where the problem is. It's also not where most Americans get their news. Most people around the world get their news. It may shock you to hear that 44% Americans still rely on television news as the main new source. That seems strange to people under 35 I'm sure who tend to rely on social media but that is still only about one third of the public very important, but not as important as local television. So that's where a lot of our work is. Very happy to say that we have CBS, NBC news and their equivalents overseas PBS as well working with us and one of the things we do is that we try to introduce the mainstream news organizations to the work of the nation and inside climate news and grist and mother Jones and others who have been toiling in these climate venues a long time and you have the sources and expertise were doing great stuff and above all the Guardian. We chose the Guardian as our lead media partner because the guardian's reporting on climate is the gold standard internationally. It is not only deep and scientifically informed, arguably even more important they play the climate story big. It is not an afterthought. Pretty much every day if you go to the website, to the homepage of the Guardian there will be a climate story if not two or three. And that is the main difference between the news outlets that I call climate woke and those that aren't. Those that aren't, they will do the obligatory climate story, when it comes up, but that does not rise to the moment. Our moment is one where in six months we will, five months now, we will be deciding whether we have a government that will take this crisis seriously or a government that is going to continue to insist on accelerating us off the cliff. So one of the things we do at covering climate now is to share. We collaborate with one another so that at the Guardian for example when it does create coverage of environmental racism for example we have a story today that's up on the Guardian very much like the first session on how dangerous heat waves are killing Americans in the federal government especially the CDC has been defunded over 15 years and does not deal with this. That is a collaboration that just brings together three of our partners. It originated at the Center for Public integrity. And now it has been co-published today by the Guardian and the nation and then we will mention in our newsletter tomorrow to all 400+ partners that they too can republish this all free of charge to the news outlet. All they have to do is push and play. And we see a lot of that pick up and we are driving increased coverage both among our partners, which is a big deal when you think about Reuters for example having 200 newsrooms, but also the power of example and we all know through funding media work journalists hate to look like they are behind the curve. They are also always watching what their competitors are doing and so when the rest of the media who are not covering climate now at least not yet when they see what we are doing especially the--- segment we did around last September and Earth Day and now we did about injustice and later this summer around extreme weather and later still politics 2020, that then drives those, the media as a whole to increase the climate

coverage. And so that is essentially what we are doing. It is a collaborative based model. Again I'm very thrilled to be here with my Guardian colleagues. We will tell you more about it from there and. Thanks so much.

>> Yeah, thank you, Mark for that introduction to this really ambitious initiative. And also great highlighting the connection with the special relationship that you have with the Guardian. So let's turn to the Guardian and we're going to hear from Jane Spencer, who is deputy editor and head of strategy at the Guardian and her colleague Rachel White, who is Executive Vice President of philanthropic and strategic partnerships at Guardian news and media. So Jane, let's start with you. You are a partner in covering climate now, but also as Mark indicated you covered stretches back a ways to, so if you can perhaps tell us about where this fits in and your approach to covering the climate of the Guardian.

>> Good morning nice to be here. Or good afternoon I guess. Covering climate, the climate crisis has always been considered a matter of urgent priority at the Guardian. And as Mark mentioned we put the story on the front page daily. we change the language officially on the style guide we use around climate. We try not to say climate change we refer to it as the climate crisis, the climate emergency. We refer to global heating instead of global warming. And we also recently announced that we will no longer take advertising from fossil fuel companies. So for us it's really a core pillar of our editorial playbook every single day, but covering climate now has allowed us to amplify that work in really extraordinary ways. And I have to say the project feel has always been incredibly timely and urgent because I could never have happened soon enough but I think in newsrooms right now when we are dealing with the twin stories of the massive global pandemic and the movement around racial justice, which are just I mean absolutely extraordinary stories that require tremendous resource from our newsrooms, the importance of keeping climate change story or the climate crisis story out front and the challenge of it is bigger than ever. So I've been really grateful to the partnership and covering climate now for keeping this conversation going in newsrooms around America and the world At a moment when they are just really major competing priorities in newsrooms and I think even at the Guardian some of these collaborative projects we have done with covering climate now recently around Earth Day, all the partners in covering climate now partnership did a week of climate solutions coverage and that was mid April right in the middle of the pandemic. But it led everyone in the partnership to confront some climate change stories and a lot of these stories that inform the best and get a lot of attention looked at things like green stimulus, that were connected to the pandemic. Making sure that climate change and the climate crisis was part of the lens we were looking at stories around the pandemic. So it has always been incredibly timely. It's especially important now when newsrooms are just overwhelmed with the story of the unrest in America at the moment and the pandemic. So yeah. I mean the first collaborative project that we did was last fall when all of the news organizations and partnership did a week of coverage leading up to the UN climate summit. And one of the things the Guardian did as part of it was a 24 hour climate blog that started in Australia

and it was on the day of one of the Friday use climate protests so it traveled around the world and checked in with youth protesters all around the globe and it was the amplification that covering climate now has been extraordinarily helpful in getting our message out around climate to a wider set of publications, allowing local news organizations that may not have dedicated climate desks to pick up our coverage. And in some cases we have gotten wonderful pieces out of it, like the story Mark mentioned on climate deaths and the deaths in the US that was provided by partnership so stitching all of the news organizations together has helped all of us improve the coverage and get the message of an unexpected places through the content sharing and really making an impact on getting the climate story out there.

>> This is great. Well I think one thing that is unique about the Guardian is that it is sort of nonprofit orientation it is an organization a media organization that we do not really have one very much like it in the US exactly. But it has that ownership structure with the stock trust and also the very robust philanthropic strategies approach. So I want to turn to Rachel and maybe see Rachel if you can help us understand how you make it work. How you are able to partner with organizations like covering climate now but also getting the funding that specialized coverage how you need, the philanthropic intercommunication that you have at the Guardian, Rachel.

>> Thanks Vince. Absolutely. I would love to talk about that. Just a kind of key off of some of the things that Jane was saying environmental coverage has been at the heart of our editorial agenda and our vision for as long as the Guardian has been around and in fact years, five, six, seven years ago as other news organizations got environmental coverage was really shrinking back, the Guardian stood tall and continued our environment coverage in a robust way and it is really gratifying to see so much of the rest of the news industry coming in behind climate and environment now in important ways and I think at the Guardian we feel we played a pivotal role in helping ensure that it was on the agenda throughout and I think that's part of the reason why we have become sort of an ideal partner for some of the covering climate now. Your point is a really good one. So we have a unique ownership structure at the Guardian we are owned by the Scott trust that has given us a huge amount of latitude and independence in the kind of stories we can cover and the ways we can follow them. But everyone on this call will recognize that a Scott trust or endowment is not enough to support a global news organization so in addition to certain traditional revenue advertising and increasingly reader revenue, about six or seven years ago we turned in the direction of thinking about the ways philanthropic support could complement some of our highest editorial priorities. And chief among them was the environment and climate. And so the principle of it is this, that we have an environment news desk, well we have multiple environment news desk some one main one in the UK and a small environment team here in the US that everyone will recognize that in covering the environment it takes a long time, it is expensive, stories erupt to life with photos and with video. So we really set out to find ways that we could complement ongoing coverage with long-running projects that had impact at the hardware we were able to tell obligated stories about the

environment over a much longer period of time. And to a large extent we found some excellent partners who helped make that possible. There are a number of philanthropic projects right now for the environment. Biggest among them is age of extinction which is a series supported by the band foundation [and Louise] campaign for nature which is an 18 month series on biodiversity and extinction, species extinction and we have seen that series really sort of perfectly suited to the moment of the pandemic and the alignment between biodiversity loss and the rise of pandemics around the world. In the US we have a series called our unequal... Unequal Earth, which is an environmental justice series that we are about a year into that. We have been very lucky to have some support from the energy foundation just for capacity support to report more on climate and environment and energy environment in the US and probably the longest running environment series we have is this land is your land which focuses on US public lands. All those projects are important. They are important in the way we can cover these kinds of subjects in a long-standing and robust way, and ensure we are thinking about the impact that they are driving but they also make it possible for us to be partners and things like covering climate now. So if you think about newsrooms being really strapped and everyone overextended and especially on demanding news desks having philanthropic support that is, both helps us generate more content but also makes it possible for us to participate in these kinds of partnerships as a real, in a substantive way, which doesn't wipe out all of our capacity is an important part of the way we think about these projects and part of the, you know, the principle that defines why we seek philanthropic support in the first place.

>> That's great, thanks for helping to explain that and helping us understand how a major commercial media organization is able to work so closely with philanthropy to make this important coverage happen. I see that we have already sparked a couple of questions from this segment. We will carry those over into the Q and A section at the end but now I want to shift gears and move to our next panel discussion. Before we do that, we are going to see a short video clip from Al Roker on NBC news and it is going to, it reflects the partnership that relates both to covering climate now and climate matters, a project of climate central. So it is a good segue from this section to the next. And we're going to see that segment, that short video clip now.

>> Anyway we are talking about some warmer weather as we get into summer. And the warm weather's going to continue. Summer is getting hotter thanks to climate change. We have the greatest summer warming in the last 50 years on the East Coast, Texas, the Rockies and out West in fact speaking of out West look at the temperature changes over the last 50 years, 2 1/2 inches, 2 1/2° warmer from Portland, 3 1/2 for Phoenix, Denver almost 2 1/2 inches... 2 1/2° warmer. And the last 50 years, 94% of all US cities have recorded warmer summer temperatures. Now as we look at today come out West we've got a higher than usual fire danger, potential for rapid fire spread command that continues again tomorrow. A much higher area and a critical risk. Southerly winds at 25 to 55 mph. Gusts and a minimum humidity of 50%. That's what's going on around the country. Here's what's happening in your neck of the woods.

>> All right, thank you, fortunately the weather is not that bad today here in Philadelphia but I want to bring Norris West back to lead our next conversation with Ben Strauss and Al Roker.

>> Yes and the weather is beautiful here today in Maryland but I did hear Al Roker talking about Mae being globally perhaps the hottest on record and possibly 2020 will be the one of the hottest five years... He will probably correct me if any of that is run. But I am delighted to introduce our next two speakers, Ben Strauss, who is president and CEO of climate central and Al Roker, America's favorite weather forecaster with NBC's Today. So gentlemen, welcome to media impact forum. And Ben, let me start with you. Would you just give a brief overview of climate central and specifically talk about the climate matters program.

>> Sure thanks so much Norris. Thanks for having me and to the Media Impact Funders as well good afternoon or morning or evening to everyone online wherever you may be. I hope what I'm going to share will be a useful resource, or may be an interesting model for this group, and please feel free to be in touch afterwards if you have questions we can't reach in the Q and A. climate central is an independent group of scientists and communicators her research and report on our changing climate and its effects and what we can do about it. We use science, big data and technology to generate thousands of local storylines and visuals that help to show that climate change is personal and show audiences what they can do about it. We address climate science, extreme weather, sealevel rise energy and many other topics and collaborate nationwide [indiscernible] we work as a B to B. so not communicate directly, but rather creating resources like a utility player for other storytellers to help share again the impacts of climate and what people can do. And we are strictly policy neutral. In our approach. Our mission, simply put is to make accurate and effective climate communication ubiquitous and frequent. And that effective part is quite important. Everything we do is organized around adding elements of effectiveness to the way we communicate on climate which is really a devilish can medications problem but we work to make the story local , to make it current, to tell it frequently, to make the story visual and to tell it through trusted messengers. All of those are elements which help make it more powerful and also to depoliticize it. We are seeking audiences that are not seeking us or climate information per se. They're not going to climb to climate information.org instead they work through trusted voices like Al, who you saw in that video, and we worked with on the side [the data and] the trends we were talking about working with his team. And more broadly our program climate matters works with TV meteorologists across the country at local, national outlets and also local stations across the country. We send out weekly packages, which include TV ready graphics illustrating different climate trends or impacts or solutions they are backed by context that we send Ellis trading science and methods and storylines behind the imagery that we share, and sometimes it is a general package and about half the time we are actually localizing that story and that graphic for every media market in the country, on average every other week. We now have about 900 TV meteorologists participating in the US. That is about

40% of the total, who have opted in. And in 2019, that resulted in more than 3500 TV segments that included those graphics, that content, which doubled the number from the year before, which had doubled the year before, which had doubled the year before. And you will see a bunch of those graphics and segments in place in the video that happens at the end. Of this section. And we are very happy to see this being taken up across the country. So this is not just California and New York where we are telling the story. You know AI, in working together with AI, we have gotten helped to raise the profile to encourage local broadcasters everywhere to use it, so we are getting tons of use in places like Texas and Georgia, Missouri and Minnesota. Florida and North Carolina. Really many of not the usual places where you wouldn't necessarily expect to see this kind of content a lot. And over the last year, plus we have been expanding the program to engage other journalists other TV journalists and print journalists and as Mark said though, TV remains a very important place so it is our starting focus. And over the course of the program we have gone from across seven years of work from 2010 to 2017 during that period the public went from 57% recognizing climate change to 72%, and the TV meteorology community went from 54% to 95%. So that is one of the indices of effectiveness, as the only group kind of working specifically in that arena. As a separate nonprofit organization. We've also done field testing of public opinion and have seen an effect where our programming over a 10 month [indiscernible] media market in south Carolina health shift some public opinion, some percentage points in a better direction of alignment with climate science and climate concern amongst the audience of that station. And another dimension of success that we have been quite pleased with is we have now seen sponsorship happen where one thing we do is provide local information forecasts on local renewable energy generation. So it is not just the solar forecast and the wind forecast but combines weather forecast with the actual installed capacity and meteorologists can talk about how much renewable energy was generated locally or will be. And we have got at one station a local renewable energy company sponsoring the station to put that on the air every day. So it's a great leveraging of resources and we are working on a couple more possible sponsorships, the media partnerships are working on that.

>> Thank you, Ben. Let me go to AI now. AI, can you talk about why climate matters has been an important collaboration for NBC and for you?

>> Well look I think we will have this belief in science and science does not lie. It points to climate change. And so we are trying to find ways to bring that to people without trying to have an agenda or not appearing to have an agenda to make sure that you just, you're just presenting facts. You are telling people this is what is happening. This is where we are going. You can make a decision on your own. And what is great is, because in a given national weather forecast in the morning there's a finite period of time, it's not like local news where some evenings local broadcasters get three and half minutes for the local news to do their broadcast. I guess, if I'm lucky 45 seconds to a minute. Maybe. During my broadcast. So have to have something that is concise, quick, visual. But that is also that flows that is organic. That fits in the broadcast. So climate

Central and climate matters, even if we don't take everything verbatim they are great jumping off point. I hate to use the phrase almost, they use it and I guess social media, they are snackable moments that people can take, get a small bite of climate science and it's not... Dumbing it down we are just making it relatable. If you thought it has been warmer in the summers in your neighborhood here is data. This says it is hotter. It is getting hotter, or even today you know talking about as you mentioned, that this will probably, this was the warmest May on record and in all likelihood this will be the warmest year, this time or the warmest year globally. But also to turn it around and say okay so globally it was the warmest even though yes we had a really chilly May and a chilly start to June, you can see it did not really affect the rest of the globe. And so we try to keep it local, but also keep it global. And climate matters helps us do that with great snapshots, great ideas for something that is quick, gets the job done, but does not belabor the point.

>> AI, if you can talk about if you can go back just a few years even before climate matters, earlier in their career because you do squeeze in so much really good powerful information in a compelling way in those 45 seconds. When you started out, or when you started in local TV and on Today you probably have the same amount of time, but it sounds as if you are able to get so much more in that 45 seconds now. Can you talk about how the reporting has evolved over that time?

>> Technology has played a big part of that. We are very gracious, as you alerted to Norris, I'm very old. When I started weather maps for either magnetic and you put some smiley sons on there or angry clouds... And or on a map you show to settle a picture that by the time it aired it was probably 12 years old, a satellite loop. Well with the advent of computers and computer graphics and big data, we are able to present much more compelling graphics, information, infographics, and put that into a fairly concise presentation and so because of that, because we can fit all of this stuff in and move it along and actually as the weather person we control the graphics, we are able to tell a story at our pace the way we want to get it in, and because especially on the network most people, you know we do our network weather but then we throw it to the local stations and the local stations provide the forecasts that people are really turning in for. But the great thing about the ability and the technology is that we can show what was kind of a dry subject and make it interesting. Visually interesting. And present it in a fairly concise quick manner, but the people understand it, get it, and what's interesting, I would say 10 years ago trying to get climate reporting in... You would get some pushback from people that it was, oh, you are pushing this liberal agenda. Well I would say in the last year, year and a half I get almost no pushback anymore. Excuse me, from presenting either from our management, which never really gave me any pushback, but they just thought well, we will let them do it, to now it is considered an asset. It's considered something that viewers want. Hence the reason why we have a partnership or are part of the consortium covering climate now. It is I think, viewers see it as value added, as does our management.

>> And Ben, we talked about the public's understanding, increased understanding of climate issues over the years. You want to go into it a little bit more in depth about how the public's understanding has emerged over time? has improved over time?

>> Yeah, I would say the public understanding, the climate change an opinion is looking good right now. There's a lot of variability as well. There was a peak in public interest around 2006, 2007, 2008 and took quite a significant decline over several years but has been steadily climbing back ever since then, until just over the last year plus it has reached, it has matched where it was at the peak, at the previous peak and in fact gone past it.

And depending on what question you ask you get different levels of support. There's very strong bipartisan support about researching and investing more in renewable energy , clean energy. That is the strongest topic. But even something like recognizing that climate is heating up. We are talking in the vicinity of 80% of Americans now believe that. And almost as many think that there is a human cause. So the opinion climate has been improving.

We are certainly seeing that same, what AI described I think management in news organizations has been shifting its perspective over the last number of years. In our work over the years we see a lot of meteorologists saying we would really like to do this but we are afraid there's going to be pushback. My editor is concerned. And we had to do a lot of social proof with their colleagues standing up and saying, you know, I was afraid too. And I did it and there really wasn't pushback in fact there was more of a positive response. And we have reached some kind of a critical mass, a critical moment where I really do think as AI said it is widely viewed as an asset so it's a great opportunity for an organization like us to be providing content to make it easy for the strapped newsrooms around the country because it's a specialized subject and I think people are also intimidated because they want to know what they are presenting is rock solid and bulletproof, that they need to be able to trust the science in case they are criticized. And that is part of where we can come in. But it's also a great time to stand up publicly and join a consortium like covering climate now and say hey look we are publicly committed to covering climate change and doing more of it over time. The research certainly indicates that besides visual messages being important, As AI was describing, the frequency is important, lots of evidence, you give people a great message, they care more, they do more for the short term, but within a month that effect wears away. So it's really important that we are producing not only that only good stories in the climate that are effective in the short term, but producing them frequently. And that's why [indiscernible] news organizations to do that again and again.

>> Thank you Ben. I want to give our viewers, just remind you to send your questions to the Q and a function. We will get into the Q and A very shortly with Ben and AI. So if you have questions for any of them or any of the panelists go ahead and send your questions, one last thing I would like to ask both of you AI and Ben. We are in the middle of a pandemic, there... Our questions about how the climate or how we are not

admitting as much carbon as we had been in the last three months because most of us are working from home right now. Lots of cars are off the road. What assumptions should we make and which ones should we be careful about? thinking maybe things are better now because we haven't been driving for the past three or four months.

>> Well, I think we did a couple reports on this on the today show and on NBC news .com. And the fact is you look at China, they have opened up pretty much back in business and their CO2 levels are back to where they were. You know, and we probably will see the same thing happen here. I mean, there was a dip of about 8%, but that still means there's 92% of it is still up there. And so yes. It took a global pandemic and nobody wants that to see, but it would take... For the year at 8% reduction over the next several years to have, to have an impact and as of right now that's not going to happen. But I think people will be, as we come out of this, I think people will be, people will be re-examining what they do and how they do things. Do they need to take a cross-country flight or three-hour flight for a two hour meeting and add it to your carbon footprint, whereas you can sit at home and you know, have, this is a fake background right now. I am actually in the Gobi desert. But you know, you can, there are all these things I think people are going to re-examine and so hopefully that has somewhat of a positive impact if enough people do it. But I don't think we can assume that a global pandemic is going to bail us out of our climate situation.

>> Great, thank you and I see that it's time now for me to hand it over to Vince again so thank you both Ben and Al.

>> Thanks Ben and Al, and Norris for leading a really full discussion we learned a lot in that segment and in the last hour because it's great, we do process so much visually I'm sure that room rate or would give Al high marks on the beautiful flowers in the background. I appreciate that. So we also learned that you can really pack a lot of information in a short period of time if you are very thoughtful about that and before we switch to Q and A we want to share a short video compilation that climate Central put together about the climate matters program that we just heard a lot about. So we are going to show the video and on the other side of it we are going to take questions. I see we already have a few. And we will invite you all to share your questions then.

[Music]

>> There is an unmistakable trend here.

>> No matter what snow we get, it will melt faster than years past.

>> Climate change and more warm air making its way with moisture and causing bigger storms.

>> Above normal days during spring time has nearly doubled

>>... In particular has seen a 55% change

[in Spanish]

- >> For every 1° increase the air can hold 4% more water vapor.
- >> An increase in these hot days in the summer.
- >> The line gradually increasing
- >> Part of our warming climate where the summers are getting warmer.
- >> The increase in the number of smoky days that are expected
- >> can lead to higher pollen levels.
- >> The change in pattern diseases spread by insects such as mosquitoes
- >> Those turbines also create a lot of job opportunities
- >> Churches and synagogues all across the country are now enjoying the benefits of tapping into the sun

[in Spanish]

- >>... From climate Central
- >> our partners at climate Central
- >>... our friends over at climate Central.
- >> The global warming is not fake news folks.
- >> Incredible what is going on right now on earth.
- >> Changing our climate, and that's why it matters.

[Music]

>> All right. So thanks. That was a great survey of all the amazing work that you have done Ben, with your partners including AI and many others. So now we are going to go to the first question. Marc Climaco is with the Ford foundation and if you didn't happen to catch it the first time around you can see the video recording of our first session with, I'm sorry the second session where we heard about indigenous voices and the different efforts by the National Geographic and the Ford foundation to support them. And other efforts to provide safety, security for frontline reporters and activists. So Marc if you want to take your mic mute off, you can ask your question for

>> Thank you, Vince, and by the way I have had an incredible pleasure getting to know Mark and covering climate now over the last year. It was actually November last year when we had the Media Impact Funders convening last year, and they ended up working with the indigenous leaders that we fund in the global South, right about actually the day right after we covered [indiscernible] pandemic so it was very interesting times. So the question is actually from Mark and the rest of the panel.

So one of the biggest critiques of the climate movement itself is that for too long its narrative has been driven largely by the global North and for a very long time we saw that reflected in the media coverage. We are seeing some changes in recent years. We are seeing more global South stories, specifically talk about climate solutions, which is fantastic. Ford works directly with indigenous leaders and communities in the global South that really position themselves as climate solutions. Last year we, when we did a media scan we have seen that only about 9% of all climate coverage represent [indiscernible] and indigenous communities is an uptick showing what [can be done so my question] are it is really a two-parter to what extent you think diversity in the media has played a role in reinforcing the global North narrative when it comes to climate coverage? And I'm also curious, what are you seeing in newsrooms in terms of the shift in their thinking around climate coverage in relation to painting a fuller picture of the movement, but also really a fuller picture of climate solutions? because there's a lot of climate solutions coming out of the global South. What are those conversations like?

>> Thanks Marc it is so good to see you again and see you looking healthy. This is a topic near and dear to my heart, having spent much of my career reporting overseas in Africa, and Asia, in Latin America and working for news organizations back in the US and Europe and trying to get them to understand the questions of justice, racial justice, economic justice have always been central to all environmental stories and in particular the climate story.

And it has been slow, let's be honest. Getting that recognition across and accepted in newsrooms and then conveyed out to the public. I am happy to say that this is exactly the topic of the most recent [talking shop] webinar that we did last week at climate now for partners in collaboration talking about how that can [phone ringing] talking about how we have got to do a better job of showing the intersectionality of environmental and climate violence.

And all of you who wish by the way, go to our website at climate.now.org and you can sign up for these kinds of webinars and also the column that I'm writing about this which will publish tomorrow. Every Wednesday morning at 8 AM we publish a call about this. And see JR and the nation and all of the other partners are free to use it as well. And I think it is unmistakable that part of the problem or part of the reason that we don't see environmental justice centered in more of our coverage has to do with the lack of diversity in newsrooms. We had Kendra Pierre Lewis with us on this webinar last week and she's a long time funded science reporter formerly with the New York Times and she talked about when you have these conversations within newsrooms it's really important to get an honest exchange. She had a line that I think sums it all up, she said to one is executive who sort of looks at diversity as a checking of the box, of the bureaucratic box rather than embracing a new real journalistic outlet she said to them, and I should say Kendra is black, she looked at this executive and said, you guys want to hire people who look like me but who think like you. And that is the problem in a

nutshell. We have got to do a better job of diversifying, especially up at the top ranks of management in newsrooms.

>> Does anybody else want to pick up on this? you are free to raise your hand. But we actually have another question that goes in a similar territory and it is from Megan Parker from the society for environmental journalism. We were looking to see if she wanted to ask it herself but I will ask it on her behalf and I think it goes into the sort of practical implications of this question. Did we get her on? No. So the practical implications are what advice or suggestions can you offer to small grantmakers interested in increasing grants to journalists of color covering climate and environmental issues in their communities? and just as a point of information, the Society of environmental journalists is currently offering small rapid response grants to individual journalists and small outlets with a priority for journalists from affinity journalism groups like the national Association of Black journalists and the national Association of Hispanic journalism. So that is a little bit of background, but a question for really anyone in terms of implications for small grantmakers who can target some of these supports. Anybody want to... Take the question?

>> I can take it. As a relatively smaller grant maker doing this type of funding I think you are right on to look at a group like Society of environmental journalists, and if you are a grant maker that's looking to fund in a specific geographical region I think they have a really great network of journalists that they can tap into to get the word out. And the good news is a little goes a long way. Like I mentioned with the water desk, those grants are anywhere from 1000 to 10,000 and the journalists are allowed to dig into some meteor stories and make the case to their editors to spend time on the stories. And so I would just encourage the fund that you reference yourself sounds like a great way.

>> Vince if I may very quickly... To specific places to look, , go to our partners at grist. Specifically a guy named Andrew Simon who runs their diversity group, and he has pulled together a whole list of journalists of color who do environmental reporting. And second, and I may get the name slightly wrong here, but just last week there was a revitalization of a group I believe is called like environmental journalists who are looking for this very kind of support.

>> [Several people speaking]

>> Rafael?

>> I might add that looking at an ABA and --- are also greater might dig into regional association so in Washington for example there was NAHJ regional group and they tend to be closer to the ground and talking to each other more and reaching out to each other might, they are going to know who is doing the kind of work and who does not have funding for it.

>> Great, well Mark you mentioned Andrew Simon from Grist, as it happens we have an essay from Andrew in our brand-new report, environmental media grantmaking, how funders are tipping the scales towards change. You can see our report probably in the chat, but also on our website. We are going to be featuring a discussion of this report at our next forum discussion on Thursday. Just in a couple days. And Andrew will be with us to talk about his work in dialogue with other essay authors. So thanks for giving an opportunity to pitch that. I also want to invite any of our panelists, we have such a crowd of knowledgeable people sharing to think of questions for each other if you want to. But in the meantime I will take a question that comes to us from Justin Kenny, and I think this is for AI, but maybe others as well. How can we make climate change stories more attractive to broadcast news? And he's thinking about this in terms of his work with the IPCC, the intergovernmental panel on climate change. And the upcoming global assessments reports that will be coming out in 2021.

>> Well, not knowing what his platform is or broadcast platform or social platform, you know I just think that making it relatable to people's everyday lives. How does it affect them. How you know, from a day to day standpoint and whether it is, I mean something as simple as we did a little bit about the fact that here in the Northeast chipmunks are running amok... It's been a mild winter, and they have just been breeding like chipmunks. Just little things like it doesn't sound like a monumental issue, but if you can relate, I just feel like if you can relate climate differences to people's lives, whether it is their pocketbook or their health or their families health, it goes a long way to making it tangible and real.

>> Such an important point. Mark?

>> yeah, Vince I would reiterate with some data what AI just said. When we did our dedicated week of climate coverage in September with our partners which were then about 320, we ran a total of 3640 stories and then we did feedback afterwards and asked our partners which ones got the most traction, which one had the most traffic. And so forth. And two themes came out. And I think both of these are especially true for broadcast news. I say that as the son of a former TV newsman. One is what AI said it, it has to be about people. If you tell stories about people that is what we as humans respond to. It's very hard for most of us to think about parts per million of carbon dioxide and 1.5° versus 2°. That is abstractions for most people. So try and find a human to tell the story. So when you are pitching whoever it is if you are pitching the local NBC station or CBS station or whatever don't just say we've got to do a story about how hot it is getting. Look at some people who are enduring that, and preferably some people who are working to solve it. Because that is the second thing that our partners told us is not just human stories that are about your local community, but what people really crave now our solutions stories because finally now people are getting that this is a crisis that is barreling down the road at us and the polling data shows that almost regardless of what your political ideology is, if you are under the age of 40 in this country you want to know not only about the climate crisis, but what are the solutions.

>> Great point. Anybody else want to pitch in on this one?

>> Vince, I would add that this is --- collaboration makes a huge difference, that the collaboration when we did our project we had a lot of time and data scientists who could really crunch data and really provide good numbers. The TV station in Baltimore did not have those resources. We basically gave them to them. Way ahead of our publication date we gave them everything we had and said can we help you. And they got really excited because then they could find the people, they knew their neighborhoods, they knew the voices. And they did a really, a couple of really nice pieces to go along with our project.

>> Yes, Ben?

>> A couple quick thoughts. One, and I could not agree more both with AI making it personal and Mark's point on solutions. I would add making it visual. Another one of our programs deals with sea level rise and projections and maps and online tools, which have been seen by millions, but when we turn those in the pictures it is hundreds of millions. When you have a science-based image that shows here is our choice, here is what Mumbai or Shanghai or New York looks like in the future if we choose path A versus path B that was just kind of, everyone has seen images like this of the water higher, but a lot of the times they are generic. But anyway, and these were very specifically pegged to choices and global negotiations, but the broader point is making it visual and as dramatically so as you can and I would also add as far as solutions are concerns that the social science suggest that the most effective packages if you can pair the solutions come the threat and the solution. So threat by itself works to a degree and solution by itself works to a degree. Put them together and you have the most powerful of all.

>> I would also...

>> Yes go ahead please

>> Add that I think it is important to integrate climate coverage into every beat in the newsroom from sports to arts to business to science and the obvious places where we cover it. So the Guardian sports team covers climate stories all the time. Like the US open and the heat is a huge story and so making sure it is integrated and not siloed is a key of getting this right I think because people are definitely going to read about the U.S. Open.

>> Well, yeah, and the Australian open we were not even sure it was going to be possible with the wildfires raging nearby up until the time of the open. So important to present the climate story in context with the other big things that matter to people. You know, one of the things that we have focused on is again in our report we have an excerpt of, or rather we also included the article written by the Guardian's long time environment editor, John Vidal, in collaboration with NSEA, which is we are creating conditions for diseases like Covid 19 to emerge, and showing the environmental and

climate connections with the other big story that is gripping our current experience. And the contributions deforestation and other interactions with animal populations that drive viruses out of the wild and into our lives. I wonder if anybody would like to reflect on the connection between Covid and climate. Rachel?

>> I just wanted to say that peace was part of this age of extinction series and you are right, we did partner with [NSEA] with John Vidal one of the things that was remarkable about that peace that we thought that really caught us by surprise was just how fast it was sort of assimilated into a lot of the thinking around the connections between biodiversity and the pandemic. And one of the things that we look at a lot of these projects as we are trying to understand the impact is something we call back links which is how often an NGO or government agency or somebody else is linking to a piece of content. That peace has more back links than any content we produce on the Guardian this year. And actually we are seeing a sort of cumulative effect of the impact in that the longer, the longer these back links sit there, the more John [Caddell] our environment team and others are being reached out to about the story, and you know, to get more information and it has prompted, we are following the story now, it has prompted more, a lot more reporting on our part, the Oak foundation has expressed interest in funding us more specifically on illegal wildlife trade, which we are looking more into. I think it is quite interesting the role that a piece like that can play in just really helping understanding it. And offering solutions, to Mark's point, that was a solutions based piece also.

>> Anybody else want to comment on... I mean, that is an amazing example. We are, in our network, we are so interested in understanding the impact of media. And so that illustration I think is very powerful.

>> Audiences are incredibly responsive to the new cycle. And so just integrating coverage into what is happening in the world is the way to get them to read things. And we, all newsrooms now look at so much data about not just what people are reading, but how long they spend with it. And if you can connect climate to the major stories that people interested in in a given moment that is the way, the easiest way to get their attention on the story. And so back to the environment all justice question, I do think the massive conversation we are having in the US right now around racial justice is a real opportunity to introduce the topic of environmental justice and look at how communities of color impacted by a climate change and other issues. So seeing the other issues opened around the pandemic there's another huge opportunity right now and we are trying to dramatically expand our environmental justice reporting as we have been doing for years now but it's actually been made possible through philanthropic funding to have a dedicated environmental justice reporter, and I think this is going to be a big year for that conversation.

>> Yeah.

>> If I can add to that, our work with the watershed collaboration has expanded in the past couple of months actually in response to both the pandemic and the current moment... Talking about equity and racial justice to really focus on water and racial justice, and why do communities of color in particular not trust the drinking water. Why do things like what happened in Flint and Newark potentially happen in Philadelphia or other cities in the watersheds we have been covering so there's willingness among the partners and the funders to be able to expand the coverage to make sure that it is especially relevant to audiences.

>> One of the other really important voices and racial justice and climate justice is Ayana Elizabeth Johnson. She's a remarkable Marine biologist. We had her actually to kick off this series in a dialogue with Amy Goodman last week. And anybody can watch that. All of these discussions are going to be recorded and posted to our site. You can watch that one now. And she talked about her work and how communities of color and underprivileged communities are most likely to see the direct impacts of climate change. And so looking for solutions that reflect their interests is extremely important to her and her work. But she also had this really remarkable piece in the Washington Post last week, where she talked about the important focus on racial justice in times of crisis like this and of course, obtaining racial justice for its own sake is important but it's also important for her, as a scientist because it is such a distraction to her work. She said in this piece, that basically she's got so much more important things that she wants to do, and the destruction of racism is you know, is just a really important thing, and keeps us from doing the important work like solutions for climate. So people should check out her really remarkable article in the Washington Post as well. Mark Hertsgaard?

>> One point in terms of how you reach out to news organizations again about the environment justice aspect of this, bear in mind, and we talk about this in the column that we are running tomorrow, there is still a perception especially at the top of newsrooms that if you talk about environmental justice that you are being improperly activist as a journalist. And I think the point that we try to emphasize to newsrooms and I would urge folks who are trying to influence newsrooms to bear in mind that talking about environment of justice, whether it be racial or economic aspects, or gender, which is something we haven't even mentioned yet today, this is not about being politically correct. This is about being journalistically correct. It is about getting the story right. Because as important as any other fact about climate change is that it hits the poor and people of color first and worst. And that is true in this country and in Louisiana, where I reported on the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. It's true in Bangladesh where I reported on what happens to sealevel rise to the people in the south of the country who will be basically submerged. It is the poor and people of color over and over and over again who get hit first and worst. And who are often the ones who are innovating the most interesting and effective solutions because they are on the front lines. As a journalist if you are not reflecting that in your coverage you are getting the story wrong. That is the point. You are missing the story. And no journalist wants to miss the story.

>> Great point. So we have one more question. It is from our can medication's director, Nina. So more than just gatekeeping and disseminating information and solutions, what is the media's role in providing places for people to discuss issues related to climate? . It's difficult to have discussions with other folks because our most popular public square is Facebook, which is a joke and full of hate and disinformation. And speaking of that, how are any of you really focusing on disinformation, which is spreading like wildfire when it comes to climate? anyone want to take any of those aspects?

>> Well I think the only thing you can do is just continue to present facts. And you know, I don't worry too much about online because you can't control that. But you can present just straight facts that relate to people's lives and try to do it as often as possible without seeming like you are chicken Little and the sky is falling. You are trying to present here is data, here is what it is. You can make your own choice. You are a smart person and not pander.

>> Great points. We heard that a majority of people are still getting their news from television we appreciate that somebody who has got that perspective is putting it out in powerful 45 second units pretty much every day. Anybody else want? Ben.

>> I agree with what Al said, and just to add we've got an initiative coming up that we will be building a bunch of automatic feeds in social media, you know, one for each local market that provides science back climate information relating to the actual weather and climate impacts and solutions people are experiencing in those places at those times. So think of it as a kind of flood of legitimate science backed information, that I don't think it is productive to get involved with trench warfare of know, this is misinformation but if we can instead supply facts and correct information while presented at scale locally, then that can be, and alert a wide range of other voices about this resource who can find it and amplify it in their conversations and social media circles , that and be transparent about the whole thing, that feels like it is maybe one kind of counter strategy. And I think mother nature unfortunately is backing up this narrative.

>> Yeah, we don't have to worry that the story is going to go away. Certainly not as we come into summer. Rafael?

>> I think like so many other things that journalists do we have to think outside our traditional box here. We have to look for different solutions. One of the things we have tried to do, we have a college with traditional practitioners and researchers and other folks and we have actually connected a research professor whose lifelong specialty is Russian disinformation with a practitioner who used to be the executive producer of Nightline with a computational journalist who just really wants to build tools to help us figure this thing out. This kind of stuff out. And I don't know what they will come up with, but they are certainly teaching better classes because they are working together and I think in the end they will come up with ideas that I would not have come up with certainly working at a newspaper 25 years from now.

>> The other thing we need to do is use the collective power of media organizations to pressure the platforms to reform their practices around disinformation. I mean, that is kind of a step back big picture solution but they profit hugely from advertising against the content that we create for those platforms. And collectively we have impact and power in pressuring Facebook and Google to have very [strong] information practices that keep disinformation out of public hands so the Guardian has been very public about that and have had a lot of confrontations with Facebook around it. But that is very key because we do have power if we act collectively in that space.

>> It is a great point and I think we are probably just a little bit over time already so we should probably wrap this really insightful conversation. I really appreciate all the contributions and all of you. We know that we just scratched the surface of each of these initiatives but we want to open this as an invitation for our network to come back to us and learn what you want to hear more about. We can always dive deeper on these topics as well but we think it is a great introduction to the range of important work that is being done in environmental journalism I want to than Al Ben and Ben, and all the panelists and all of Norris those leading the discussions with this, and for anyone participating for at the end of the experience please wait for the prompt and take the survey. It is a brief three minute survey that follows this to help us to understand what we can do better and please also come back on Thursday when we are going to be talking about our great new report, the environmental media grantmaking. We are going to hear from the authors of the essays in that report as well. Thank you all.

>> Thank you