



Overseas Press Club
of America

Bulletin Jan. 7, 2021

Greetings!

I hope your holiday season was full of good cheer and that you're having a happy and productive New Year. I want to tell you about two exciting initiatives your Club has already embarked on this year.



First, if you attended the OPC annual awards dinner in October, you heard about our fundraising effort to help Afghan journalist-refugees. Since then, we've raised \$28,500, including a generous grant from a foundation associated with OPC member Joel Brand, a former correspondent for the Washington Post, Newsweek and CNN.

Under the guidance of OPC Foundation President Bill Holstein, we have formed a task force to set eligibility rules, create an application and judging process, promote the program and hopefully distribute grants by Feb. 11. Thanks to Bill, a lot has been accomplished in a short time.

Doing the judging will be OPC and OPC Foundation governors. We also have enlisted judges from outside groups such as Women for Afghan Women, PEN America and the Coalition for Women in Journalism. Abdul Waheed Wafa, who reported from Afghanistan for The New York Times, is also helping.

Applications have poured in. So far, we have received 283 requests for 14 grants of \$2,000 each. Only those physically in the U.S. qualify, which still means we have about 10 applicants for each grant.

All of them have heart-breaking stories about trying to get into the Kabul airport, then waiting for days amid the chaos to get a flight out. They endured travel to multiple countries and U.S. military bases, sometimes with extended families in tow. In some cases, families were left behind. “I left with only the shoes on my feet,” one journalist wrote. A handful have been able to leave U.S. military bases and are living in hotels or homes. Now they face major hurdles getting work permits, establishing bank accounts and obtaining driver’s licenses.

Some applicants supplied written material or clips. Afghanistan had a surprisingly robust media scene, created in part with U.S. funding. Many top-notch female reporters and broadcasters are among the applicants. Bottom line: We hope this tranche of funds is the first of many. We are reaching out to more foundations, hoping they will contribute once we have demonstrated our process. Meanwhile, won't you help us help more Afghan journalists? Contributions can be made via [this link](#), or by using the QR code below.

The second initiative I am proud to tell you about grew out of a recent board meeting at which some of our new governors suggested the OPC do more to help younger, and especially freelance, journalists learn the trade. That idea led us to create a series of “How I Did It” online conversations between reporters and their editors on how big, award-winning pieces were brought to fruition.

We hope these monthly talks will showcase exemplary foreign reporting and provide guidance and inspiration to others who want to do similar work. Future programs will focus on how to pitch a story, secure funding, interact with editors – and everything in between.

To kick off the workshops, Nadja Drost, an award-winning journalist and documentary filmmaker, has agreed to discuss with Kit Rachlis, a senior editor at ProPublica, how she reported and wrote her Pulitzer Prize-winning story on migrants crossing the Darien Gap. Moderating the discussion on Feb. 3 will be Marina Walker Guevara, an OPC governor and executive editor at the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting.

Please keep reading this issue of the Bulletin for details, updates on what your colleagues are doing, and resources you can use. Happy reading!

Paula Dwyer
OPC President



Click on the QR image on the right or

scan it with your smartphone camera to open the OPC's donation page to make contributions via Paypal to the OPC's efforts to help Afghan journalists who are resettling outside of the country.

And thank you again to all members who have already contributed!



The graphic features a background of colorful, tangled lines. In the top left, there is a pink circular logo with the OPC globe icon and the text "Overseas Press Club of America". Next to it is a blue starburst containing the text "Honoring the Best in International Journalism". The central text reads "CALL FOR ENTRIES" in large yellow letters, followed by "ANNUAL AWARDS" in white. At the bottom left, it says "Enter Online: www.opcofamerica.org". On the right side, there are two blue boxes with white text. The top box lists eligible media types: "We invite you to submit entries for international coverage in Newspapers, News Services, Digital, Magazines, Radio, Podcasts, Television, Video, Cartoons, Books and Photography." The bottom box contains the "Eligibility Period: January 1, 2021 - December 31, 2021", the "General Deadline: January 31, 2022", and the "Cornelius Ryan Award Deadline: January 10, 2022".

OPC
Overseas Press Club
of America

Honoring
the Best in
International
Journalism

**CALL FOR
ENTRIES**
ANNUAL AWARDS

Enter Online:
www.opcofamerica.org

We invite you to submit
entries for international
coverage in Newspapers,
News Services, Digital,
Magazines, Radio, Podcasts,
Television, Video, Cartoons,
Books and Photography.

Eligibility Period:
**January 1, 2021 -
December 31, 2021**

General Deadline:
January 31, 2022
Cornelius Ryan Award Deadline:
January 10, 2022

Application deadlines are quickly approaching for the OPC Annual Awards to honor the year's best in international journalism across 22 categories.

The submission deadline for the OPC's Cornelius Ryan Award is on **Monday, Jan. 10 at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time.**

Ryan Award submitters, please note that this year we're trying to switch to digital book submissions. If possible, please upload a PDF copy of the book in the awards submission form or provide a download link where prompted. Read more about formatting for digital book submissions on the award submission page.

The deadline for all other categories is **Jan. 31 at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time.**

Please note that this year for the Ryan book award we're trying to switch to digital book submissions. If possible, Ryan Award submitters should upload a PDF copy

of the book in the awards submission form or provide a download link where prompted.

Click on the button below to read more and submit entries. Thank you to all who have helped us spread the word on social and professional networks.

[OPC Annual Awards Submission Page](#)

Calling All Members: Please Add Your Information for the 2022 OPC Member Directory

Dear OPC members, we are gathering information to be included in a digital directory to share with members. This year, members who wish to participate can opt-in by filling out the Google Form linked below. We will share the results with members in February. We hope it will make it easier for you to connect with fellow journalists. Only members who are up-to-date with 2021-22 dues will be included.

Patricia Kranz
OPC Executive Director

[Fill Out Our Member Directory Form](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Feb. 3: 'How I Did It'

Nadja Drost Reveals How She Reported and Wrote the Pulitzer-Prize Winning Story on Migrants Crossing the Darien Gap

Time: 6:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

Place: Online via Zoom

Nadja Drost and editor Kit Rachlis will kick off the OPC's new series "How I Did It," pairing freelance journalists with their editors or producers. The OPC's goal is to offer our many freelance members



APRIL 2, 2020

"When can we really rest?"

More migrants than ever are crossing the Colombia-Panama border to reach the U.S. Five days inside the Darién Gap, one of the most dangerous journeys in the world.

By Nadja Drost

Photographs by Carlos Villalón, Bruno Federico, and Lisette Poole

the opportunity to interact with highly successful journalists. Topics will include how to pitch a story, secure funding, interact with editors and everything in between. Future programs will feature photographers, documentarians and cartoonists.

Moderating the discussion will be **Marina Walker Guevara**, an OPC governor and executive editor at the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting..

Nadja Drost is a Pulitzer Prize- and Emmy Award-winning journalist and documentary filmmaker who works across print, radio, television, and documentary film.

Her reporting on the extraordinary journey of migrants from around the world who traverse the Darien Gap – a road-less, mountainous jungle straddling the Colombia-Panama border – to reach the U.S., won several awards. [A longform piece](#) she wrote for the [California Sunday Magazine](#) was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Feature Writing, as well as first place for Magazine Feature Writing from the National Headliner Awards, the One World Media Refugee Reporting Award, and Honorable Mention from the James Foley Medill Medal for Courage in Journalism.

A television series about the Darien Gap, 'Desperate Journey,' she reported with videographer Bruno Federico for the PBS NewsHour, was recognized with an Emmy and Peabody award, and received the Best in Show for television from the National Headliners Award in 2021.

Kit Rachlis is a senior editor at ProPublica. He spent seven years as a senior editor at California Sunday Magazine, where he oversaw Drost's Darien Gap story, "When Can We Really Rest?" Previously, Rachlis was a senior editor at The Atlantic. He also served as editor in chief of LA Weekly, Los Angeles magazine and the American Prospect and as a senior projects editor at the Los Angeles Times. Stories he edited have won a Livingston Award, a George Polk Award, a John Bartlow Martin Award, a James Beard Award, a PEN USA Award and a Front Page Award.

[RSVP Now](#)



Feb 16: Book Night With Mark Clifford To Discuss 'Today Hong Kong, Tomorrow The World'

Time: 6:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

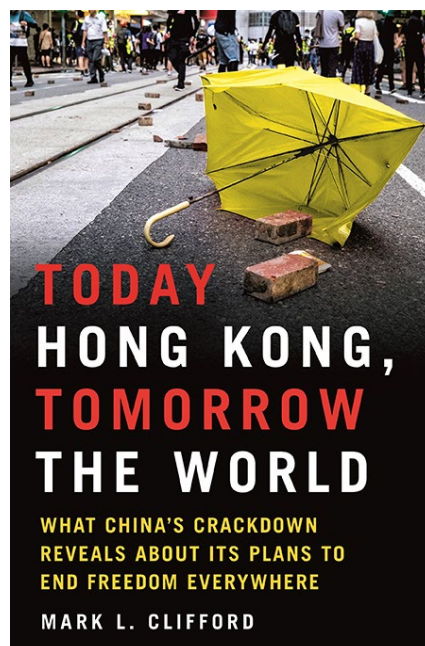
Place: Online via Zoom

OPC member **Mark Clifford** argues in his new book that China's repressive tactics in Hong Kong are a playbook for other repressive regimes, serving as what he called a "blueprint for the sorts of tactics that China is increasingly wielding against democratic societies around the globe."

Join the OPC for a Book Night on Feb. 16 to discuss *Today Hong Kong, Tomorrow the World: What China's Crackdown Reveals About Its Plans to End Freedom Everywhere*.

The moderator will be OPC Governor Jodi Schneider, political news director at Bloomberg News.

Registrants will receive a link to join the Zoom call about an hour before the program.



[RSVP Now](#)

People by Chad Bouchard

SCHOLARS

Poet **Tess Taylor**, winner of the Harper's Magazine Scholarship in 2004, was interviewed by High Window [on Dec. 3](#) as part of its Voice of America series. Taylor, who is the poetry critic for NPR's All Things Considered, won her OPC Foundation scholar award when she was a graduate student in journalism at New York University.



Kantaro Komiya, the Stan Swinton Fellowship winner in 2020, has been churning out stories for Reuters since taking on his role as economic policy reporter at the agency's Tokyo bureau last summer. He has more than 50 bylines linked on his bio

page, most recently including [a Jan. 4 story](#) about Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's plans to curb the omicron variant, and a pair of stories on Dec. 26, one providing analysis of the country's [retail sales](#) picture in light of COVID-19 and another on more than 100 [forced flight cancellations](#) from heavy snow over the holidays.



UPDATES

Dieu Nalio Chery, the 2019 winner of the OPC's Robert Capa Award for work he did in his native Haiti for The Associated Press, wrote to the OPC to report that he was threatened by gangsters in Haiti and fled to New York City with his family. The upheaval started on March 17, 2021, after photos he had taken during a violent protest for the AP in the capital of Port-au-Prince were published, when "gangs who showed up in the pictures were looking for me everywhere." The Open Society (OSF), Fokal Haiti, AP, and Global Human Rights Defenders Fund (HRDF) are supporting him financially for one year, and he has a full scholarship for one year at CUNY where he is studying and sharing his experience with other students. AP helped him leave Haiti, and the Magnum Foundation worked very hard to help the family find an apartment at Westbeth Artist Housing in Manhattan, he said. The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) is providing counseling support. Getting visas for his family was not difficult, he said, noting that the US embassy in Haiti understood what he was facing. In New York he is doing freelance work for Reuters and The New York Times. His two daughters go to local schools and his wife is studying English. "I am worried about my future here because I have to start everything again. I am looking for a stable job," he said.



Beth Knobel, an OPC Governor and longtime member, posted a link on social media to [a Jan. 5 article](#) on the Russian news site agentura.ru indicating that the Russian intelligence service was spying on her and colleagues while they were reporting for CBS News in Moscow in 2006. Knobel provided a rough translation of the article in her post, which said that on April 30, 2006, "Oleg Skopintsev, acting head of the Department of Counterintelligence operations of the DKRO – the most combat unit of the FSB Counterintelligence Service, which is responsible for hunting foreign spies in Lubyanka – sent a report to his leadership 'on the plans of the Moscow office of the American TV company CBS.' It was about Beth Knobel's work on the film about 'Nord-Ost,'" a reference to a terrorist attack and hostage crisis at a theater in Dubrovka where the musical "Nord-Ost" was playing, in which Russian special forces used gas during a raid that ended in at least 130 deaths. The original CBS piece she had been working on [is linked here](#).



OPC member **Kathy Gannon**, news director for Pakistan and Afghanistan for The Associated Press, reflected on her 2021

coverage of what she called “a particularly tumultuous year” in Afghanistan during a year-end video package and interview [on Dec. 27](#). She said turmoil started with U.S. President Joe Biden’s announcement of a total U.S. and NATO troop withdrawal in August. “It seems that it really caused a sense of abandonment within the Afghan Army. Afghans had been increasingly despondent with the future of their country, even before the Taliban took power,” she said. The withdrawal spurred a social media campaign that falsely claimed Americans would transport anyone who showed up at the airport out of the country, causing chaotic scenes during the exodus. The AP also published an expanded reporter’s notebook [covering](#) Gannon’s work in 2021. Gannon has written and contributed to dozens of AP stories since the announcement, including [friction](#) within the ranks of Taliban leadership, [restrictions](#) on education for women and girls, the Taliban’s [refusal](#) to work with the U.S. to contain Islamic State, and interviews in December with the Taliban’s Foreign Minister [Amir Khan Muttuqi](#) and former Afghan President [Hamid Karzai](#)



OPC member **Elena Becatoros’** coverage for The Associated Press shifted from Greece to Afghanistan in December as she wrote for the news service from Kabul about stories including [climate change](#), the [reopening](#) of a national museum, a piece on [traditional wrestling](#), and a story about parents [selling](#) children in desperation amid poverty. On Jan.1, she [posted](#) on Twitter that the AP had received a lot of response from readers hoping to help the families mentioned in her article and the agency was hoping to “have some suggestions in coming days.” Becatoros has worked as the Southeast Europe bureau chief for the AP, based in Athens, since mid-2007 and continued to report on that region during her stint in Kabul.

Mellissa Fung, an OPC member and award-winning Canadian broadcast journalist who was held captive in Afghanistan for 28 days in 2008, moderated a webinar for the Macdonald-Laurier Institute [in December](#) to discuss Canada’s responsibility for supporting Afghan allies who helped the country’s military while deployed there. Fung had been in Kabul in July just two weeks before the troop withdrawal, and said Canadians, Americans and people from other countries contributing to NATO forces were “completely unprepared for something so many people had warned us about.



OPC member **Rachel Donadio** moderated a panel of historians for the Museum of Jewish Heritage [on Jan. 5](#) about the “politics of memory” in Poland after Poland’s nationalist government enacted a law in 2018 that criminalized speech that holds Poland responsible for Nazi crimes. Donadio, a contributing writer for The Atlantic based in Paris, said in her introduction that the situation in Poland reminded her of a quote she heard while reporting in Moscow in 2015, that “the future of Russia had become unpredictable, and so had the past.” She said as the government has grown increasingly authoritarian and isolated, it has also revised



history. The discussion was co-presented by the museum and Descendants of Holocaust Survivors.

Claudia Rosett, a past OPC Award winner, club member and foreign policy fellow at the Independent Women's Forum, was [interviewed](#) about Hong Kong and China for a recent issue of inFOCUS from the Jewish Policy Center. She said that in mid-2020, while the world was preoccupied with the coronavirus pandemic, "China struck back, dealing a mortal blow to Hong Kong's freedoms by imposing a 'National Security Law' that, in effect, empowers the administration to criminalize any form of dissent or pretty much any behavior, they dislike." Rosett previously worked as a staff writer and editor for The Wall Street Journal, a columnist at Forbes, and has contributed to The New York Times, The Weekly Standard, and other publications. She received an OPC Citation for Excellence in recognition of her on-the-scene reporting of the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989.



People Column Jan. 7

New Resources

RESOURCES

Dart Centre Europe has posted a guide for best practices in reporting on sexual violence in conflict. The multi-page resource covers preparation, ethical concerns, informed consent from sources, guidance for editors, conducting interviews with sensitivity, care for sources and for yourself as interviewer. [Read the guide here.](#)

University of California Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism provides an updated list of fellowships on its website, with programs for dozens of organizations listed with links to applications pages. [Explore the page here.](#)

The **Journalist's Resource** organization has posted a tipsheet on how to cover misinformation about health from public officials, with best practices on how to debunk and scrutinize false statements. [Read the tipsheet here.](#)

TRAINING AND PROGRAMS

Immersive training company **Head Set** and the **James Foley Fund** are calling for U.S. freelance journalists to participate in a free virtual reality training session on [Feb. 4](#). The session will be focused on safely covering protests and riots as well as managing stress. To sign up and find out more, email tom.durkin@jamesfoleyfoundation.org.

The **International Journalists' Network (IJNet)** posted a recording of its Dec. 31 webinar on conducting undercover investigative journalism projects for multimedia outlets. Presenters were Charlie Northcott, a producer for BBC's Africa Eye, and

Gbolahan Peter Macjob, a multimedia producer, presenter and reporter for BBC World Service. [Watch the program here.](#)

GRANTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Investigative Reporters and Editors (IRE) is calling for submissions for the 2021 IRE Awards. The submission deadline is Jan. 14 at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time. [Read more and apply here.](#)

NBC Universal is looking for a copyeditor position based in New York at Grow, a production of CNBC and Acorns focused on personal finance and investing. [Read more and apply here.](#)

The **Magnum Foundation** is calling for applications to the Magnum Foundation Fellowship, a program offering stipends, mentorship, and arts administration experience to early-career photographers. Applications are due Jan. 12. [Read more and apply here.](#)

The **International Center for Journalists (ICFJ)** and the ONE Campaign are sponsoring the Michael Elliott Award for Excellence in African Storytelling to honor two up-and-coming journalists in Africa in 2022. Entries will be selected based on quality and the impact their work has had in communities. Winners will receive a cash prize, a \$1,000 reporting grant, and a personalized crystal award. One winner will receive a two-week internship at The Economist in London, and another will spend time in U.S. newsrooms in Washington, D.C., and New York City. Applications are open until Jan. 30. [Read more and apply here.](#)

Applications are open for the **Knight-Bagehot Fellowship in Economics and Business Journalism** at Columbia University. The fellowship is open to full-time editorial employees of newspapers, magazines, wire services, digital media, television and radio news organizations, as well as to freelance journalists, from anywhere in the world. The application deadline for the 2022-23 academic year is Jan. 31, 2022. [Read more and apply here.](#)

The **Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma** is calling for applications for the Ochberg Fellowship, a program for senior and mid-career journalists “who wish to deepen their knowledge of emotional trauma and psychological injury, and improve reporting on violence, conflict and tragedy.” This year's fellowship will be held July 22 to 28 at Columbia University in New York. Applications are due by Feb. 22. [Read more and apply here.](#)

More Resources

- **First Draft** has been hosting a series of presentations on COVID-19 for journalists, and you can browse the archives [here](#).
- The **Columbia University's Brown Institute for Media Innovation** has compiled a large repository of documents on COVID-19 via FOIA requests. [Explore the database here.](#)
- **ACOS assembled** a substantial list of COVID-19 resources for journalists, including links to practical safety advice, funding opportunities, hardship and

- emergency funds, and reporting resources such as guides for fact checking.
- **ICFJ** [launched](#) a page for COVID-19 resources for journalists.
 - **Rory Peck Trust** has a [resource page](#) for pandemic coverage. It includes safety guidelines, funding sources, job opportunities and online training.

The OPC has added these links to a special COVID-19 section on the member-only Resources page available to members who have logged in. Watch that page as we share more. Click the button below to go directly, or find it in your Member Dashboard under "Resources."

If you have any issues accessing the resources page, please contact Chad Bouchard at chad@opcofamerica.org for credentials.

OPC Resources Page

