



Addendum

Support Materials

What Funders Want (*Social Solutions*)

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10 Tips for Getting Your Op-Ed Piece Placed (*NonprofitMarketingGuide.com*)

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Social Solutions

FOUNDATION REPORTING STUDY

WHAT FUNDERS WANT

OUR APPROACH

We surveyed a group of representatives from various foundations and charitable trusts, who we are calling funders, from around North America. The purpose of conducting the survey was to discover how funders decide on providing funding to nonprofit organizations.

When drafting the survey, we utilized previous market research as the base for questions. It was important to know whether past studies and trends were still relevant in 2017, and how they have changed. We crafted the survey questions to pinpoint the exact criteria foundations use to determine where funding dollars go. It's important to note the distinction of "foundation funding".

GRANTSPACE.ORG DEFINES A FOUNDATION AS:

“ A foundation is a non-governmental entity that is established as a nonprofit corporation or a charitable trust, with a principal purpose of making grants to unrelated organizations, institutions, or individuals for scientific, educational, cultural, religious, or other charitable purposes. This broad definition encompasses two foundation types: private foundations and grantmaking public charities. ”

Foundations historically provide the largest amount of funds outside of governments. This study solely focused on foundations and charitable trusts.

The survey covered three elements in the survey:

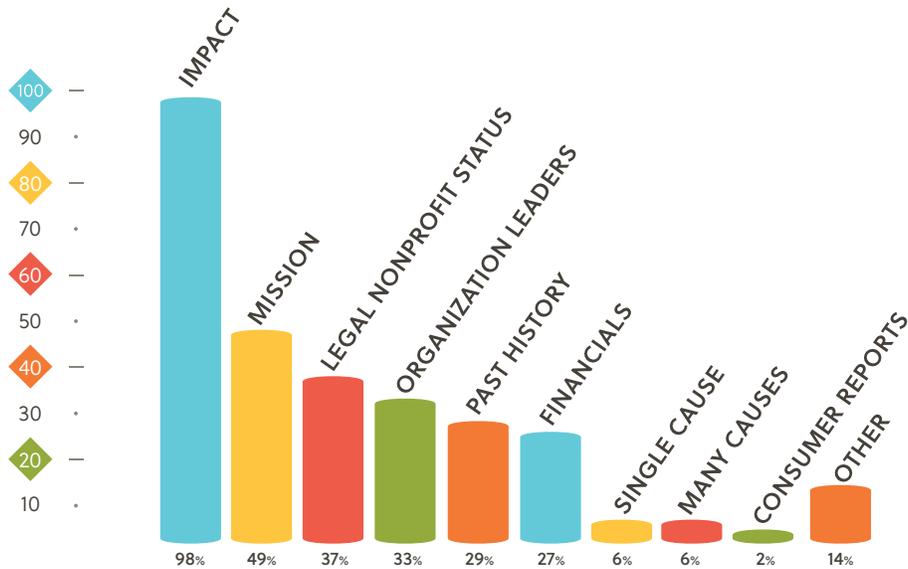
- 1 Current, past, and future demands for reporting
- 2 Preferences for information, format, and channels of displaying reports
- 3 Key areas nonprofits report on to present to foundations

All responses were voluntary, confidential, and analyzed as a group.



TOP 3 MOST IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION ITEMS FOR FUNDING

Figure 1 illustrates what funders identify as their three most important considerations for funding. Impact (98%), mission (49%), and legal nonprofit status (37%) were the most common responses.



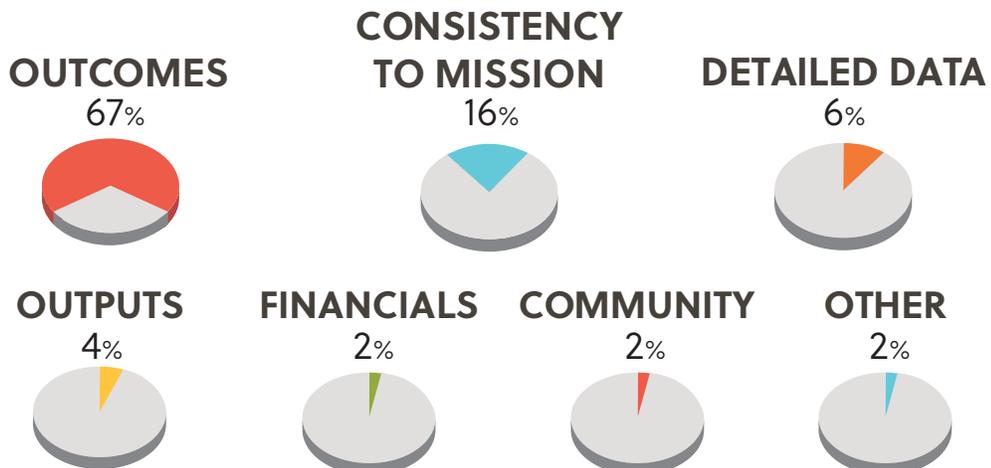
Other answers: Timing, Sustainability / Longevity, Stability, Capacity

FIGURE 1



BEST INDICATOR WHEN EVALUATING AN ORGANIZATION'S IMPACT

Knowing that 98% of funders identify "impact" as one of their top three considerations when funding organizations is highly valuable. Understanding how your organization can demonstrate its impact is the next step. For 67% of funders, outcomes are the best indicator of an organization's impact followed by consistency to mission (16%).



Other answers: "Fidelity of implementation - Did they do what they said they were going to do? Example: if X organization did a training for teachers, did the teachers take up the new lessons appropriately?"

FIGURE 2

TOP 3 THINGS FUNDERS LOOK FOR IN REPORTING

Knowing that impact, mission, and legal nonprofit status are of utmost importance to funders, the next question is how to demonstrate those and other important factors. Funders are seeking program outcomes (88%) and impact stories (41%) in effective impact reporting. The least sought after elements were donation usage (16%), past performance (16%), and mission (14%).

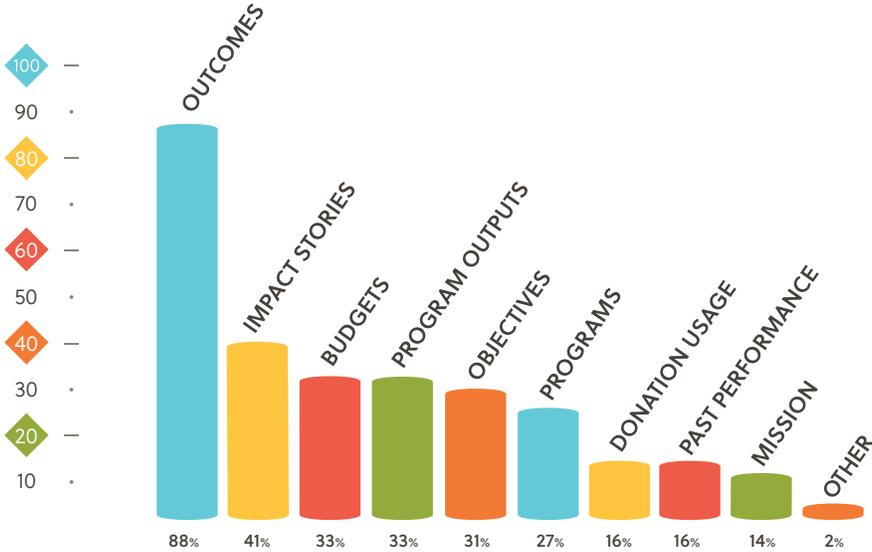


FIGURE 3

PREFERRED REPORTING FORMATS

Funders are notably looking for impact stories from the organizations they support (82%). Other reporting formats though are quite fractured with physical paper reports being preferred by 41%, graphs by 37%, and spreadsheets by 35%.

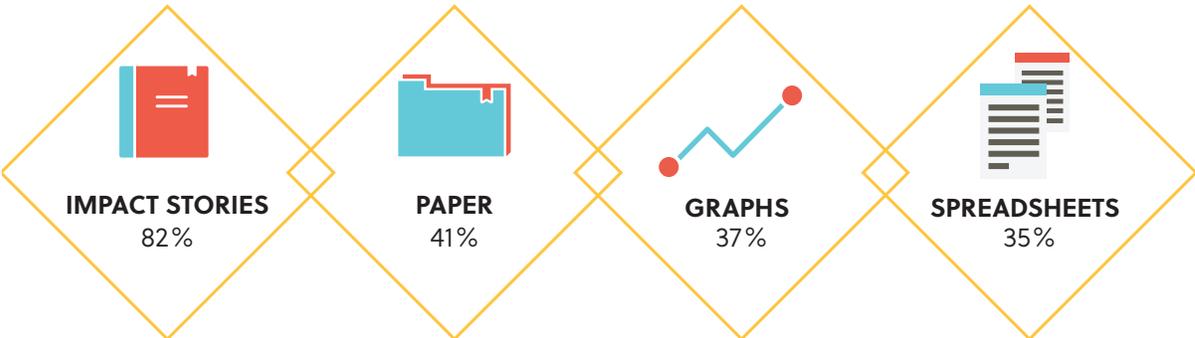
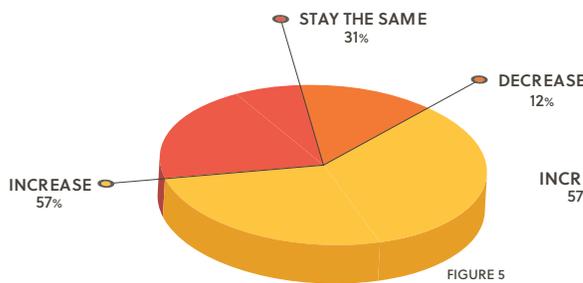


FIGURE 4

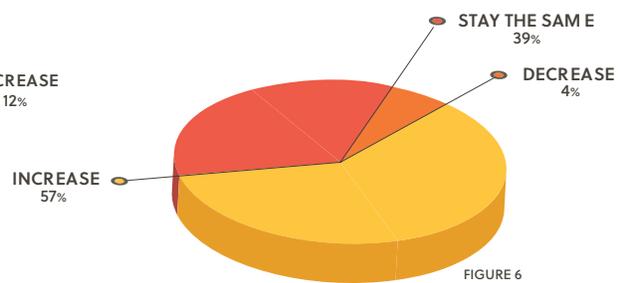
CHANGES IN REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

If it seems like reporting requirements from funders have increased in the past 5 years, it isn't your imagination; 57% of funders say they have. Looking forward, the expected trajectory is that these requirements will continue to be in place and even increase. Only 4% of funders believe their reporting requirements will decrease in the next 5 years.

CHANGES IN THE PAST 5 YEARS?



CHANGES IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS?



HOW DO YOU DETERMINE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AN ORGANIZATION?

Finally, funders told us in their own words what they are looking for from organizations. The following word cloud demonstrates that "outcomes" was the most frequently used word in their responses demonstrating consistency with the data in Figure 2.

Specific, yet anonymous, quotations from our survey can be seen below.

“ We look at what the organization or program intends to achieve and whether or not they do. If they fall short of their objectives, we won't rule them out. We look at the data, analyze the factors that contributed to the results, and determine any changes that can be made. We will work with the organization during this review process and support a revised plan. ”

“ We look at outcomes, impact as well as what they learned/insights gained. Sometimes a project that fails is a success. We don't consider failure to be bad. ”

“ Proven capacity to achieve intended outcomes. ”

“ Site visits and reports from the organization. ”



“ We think that reports are the best way to determine if the organization is effective its sector, if they achieve their short-term goals, in the financial and beneficiaries, we believe that an organization that can do great things and move forward. ”

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

IMPACT, IMPACT, IMPACT.

Funders identified impact as one of their top three most important considerations for funding.

IMPACT IS DEMONSTRATED THROUGH OUTCOMES AND STORIES.

Funders clearly value impact above all else. An overwhelming 98% of funders. When looking at nonprofits' reports, 88% of funders want to see program outcomes data and 81% of funders say impact stories are desirable.

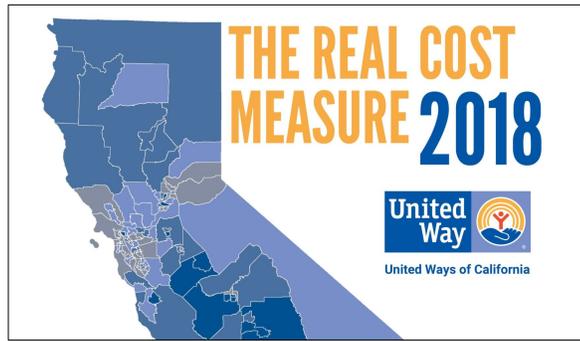
REPORTING REQUIREMENTS WILL CONTINUE TO INCREASE.

Reporting requirements will continue to increase. In the past 5 years, 57% of funders say their reporting requirements have increased. Looking ahead to the next 5 years, most funders expect reporting requirements to stay about the same or increase more. Only 4% expect reporting requirements to decrease.

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The Real Cost Measure in California

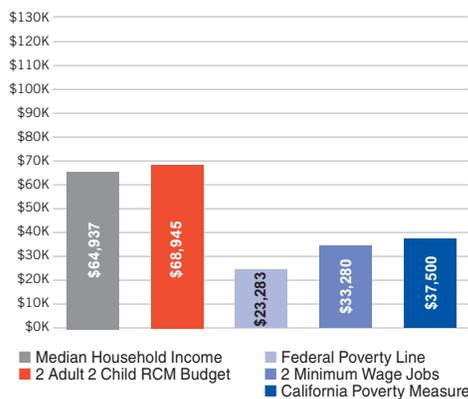
Riverside

The **Real Cost Measure** (RCM) estimates the amount of income required to meet basic needs (the “Real Cost Budget”) for a given household type in a specific community. The Real Cost Measure builds a bare-bones budget that reflects constrained yet reasonable choices for essential expenses: housing, food, transportation, health care, taxes and child care.

Total Households Below Real Cost Measure 196,588	Percent of Households Below Real Cost Measure 36%	Percent of Households below Real Cost Measure Which Have at Least One Working Adult 96%
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2016 Annual County Income Comparison

(Based on a household of 2 adults, 1 infant and 1 school-age child)



Three Real Cost Budgets for the County

	1 Adult	2 Adults	2 Adults, 1 Infant, 1 School-Age Child
Housing	9,576	11,340	14,244
Food	3,324	6,660	13,368
Health care	2,172	4,356	8,712
Transportation	5,004	10,008	10,008
Child care (net)	0	0	14,376
Miscellaneous	2,004	3,240	6,072
Taxes/Credits	778	1,061	2,165
Final Budget	\$22,859	\$36,666	\$68,945

The Real Cost Measure in Riverside

Households of color struggle disproportionately...

- Across the state, African Americans and Latinos have a disproportionate number of households with incomes below the Standard. In this area, of the 196,588 households below the Real Cost Measure, 109,520 are Latino.

Families with children face a larger barrier to economic security.

- 62% of households with children under six struggle, a rate nearly twice that of the rest of the county.
- Single mothers are most likely to struggle. 71% percent in the county are below the Real Cost Measure.

Families work, but don't earn enough...

- 96% of households below RCM have at least one working adult.
- 75% of heads of household who work are employed full time and year round.
- A family of four (2 adults, one infant, one school age child) would need to hold more than 3 full time, minimum-wage jobs to achieve economic security.

High housing costs are a major challenge for struggling households...

- 41% of all households in the county spend more than 30% of their income on housing.

Education % Below RCM

Less than High School	67%
High School Diploma	45%
Some College/Vocational	32%
College Degree or Higher	17%

Household Type % Below RCM

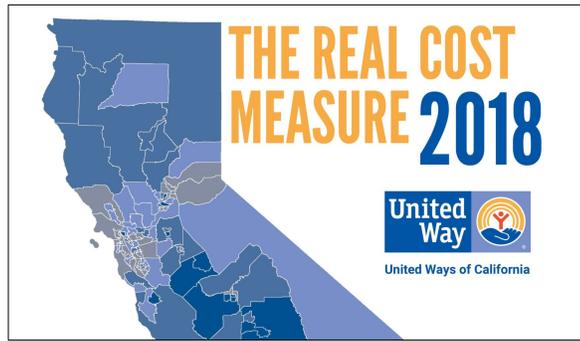
Single Mother	71%
Seniors	29%
Married Couple	32%
Informal Family	31%

Race/Ethnicity % Below RCM

Latino	53%
African American	36%
Asian American	28%
White	24%

Citizenship/Nativity % Below RCM

Foreign Born, Non-Citizen	59%
Foreign Born, Naturalized	41%
U.S.-Born Citizen	29%



The Real Cost Measure in California

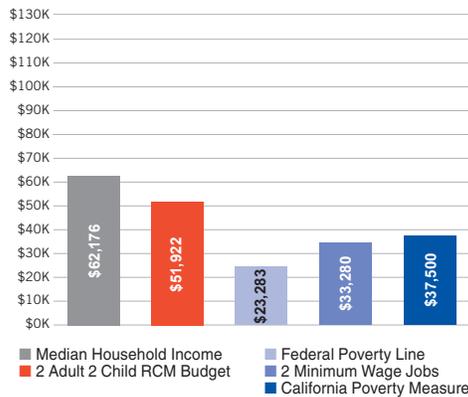
San Bernadino

The **Real Cost Measure** (RCM) estimates the amount of income required to meet basic needs (the “Real Cost Budget”) for a given household type in a specific community. The Real Cost Measure builds a bare-bones budget that reflects constrained yet reasonable choices for essential expenses: housing, food, transportation, health care, taxes and child care.

Total Households Below Real Cost Measure 172,713	Percent of Households Below Real Cost Measure 36%	Percent of Households below Real Cost Measure Which Have at Least One Working Adult 97%
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2016 Annual County Income Comparison

(Based on a household of 2 adults, 1 infant and 1 school-age child)



Three Real Cost Budgets for the County

	1 Adult	2 Adults	2 Adults, 1 Infant, 1 School-Age Child
Housing	9,576	11,340	14,244
Food	3,336	6,672	13,392
Health care	2,160	4,308	8,628
Transportation	4,968	9,948	9,948
Child care (net)	0	0	0
Miscellaneous	2,004	3,228	4,620
Taxes/Credits	775	1,049	1,090
Final Budget	\$22,819	\$36,546	\$51,922

The Real Cost Measure in San Bernadino

Households of color struggle disproportionately...

- Across the state, African Americans and Latinos have a disproportionate number of households with incomes below the Standard. In this area, of the 172,713 households below the Real Cost Measure, 95,517 are Latino.

Families with children face a larger barrier to economic security.

- 55% of households with children under six struggle, a rate nearly twice that of the rest of the county.
- Single mothers are most likely to struggle. 70% percent in the county are below the Real Cost Measure.

Families work, but don't earn enough...

- 97% of households below RCM have at least one working adult.
- 76% of heads of household who work are employed full time and year round.
- A family of four (2 adults, one infant, one school age child) would need to hold more than 2 full time, minimum-wage jobs to achieve economic security.

High housing costs are a major challenge for struggling households...

- 42% of all households in the county spend more than 30% of their income on housing.

Education % Below RCM

Less than High School	65%
High School Diploma	45%
Some College/Vocational	32%
College Degree or Higher	14%

Household Type % Below RCM

Single Mother	70%
Seniors	30%
Married Couple	29%
Informal Family	33%

Race/Ethnicity % Below RCM

Latino	46%
African American	44%
Asian American	26%
White	25%

Citizenship/Nativity % Below RCM

Foreign Born, Non-Citizen	59%
Foreign Born, Naturalized	35%
U.S.-Born Citizen	31%



10 TIPS FOR GETTING YOUR OP-ED PIECE PLACED

A well-placed op-ed can help your nonprofit call attention to an important issue or change minds about a controversial topic.

Unlike reported news stories, op-eds are opinion pieces that are written by those who aren't on the staff of a newspaper, magazine or website. They offer outside voices the opportunity to express opinions and share ideas in their own words.

Traditionally, they appear opposite the editorial page (hence the name, op-ed), which is where the newspaper's editorial board expresses its opinion on important issues.

But while newspapers don't quite carry the same influence as they once did, op-eds can nonetheless be valuable tools for advocacy-minded organizations and groups that are looking to raise awareness about a problem or issue.

In fact, one could argue that op-eds have more influence than ever.

That's because a published op-ed not only appears in the newspaper, it also appears online, which gives your nonprofit the opportunity to point to it on its own site, in blog posts, and through its social media channels.

But, as is the case with pitching stories, it's a challenge to get news outlets to run your opinion piece.

Newspapers and other outlets typically only have the resources and space to run a limited number of op-eds. As result, competition for these pieces can be fierce.

So how can you increase your odds of getting published?

Here are 10 tips that can help you get your op-ed to the top of the pile:

1. Be Targeted

Before you begin the process of writing and pitching an op-ed, spend some time thinking about which outlet or outlets are of greatest value in terms of reaching your target audiences. If you're a locally focused nonprofit, that will likely be your local newspaper. But it could also be an outlet that reaches a certain demographic, a trade publication, or a website.

2. Get to Know the Publication

Once you've identified the outlet you're looking to target, spend some time reading its opinion pages. Get a sense of the type of pieces it typically runs and its preferred tone. Reach out to the opinion editor to inquire about its editorial guidelines and, if possible, discuss potential topics or ideas. This will help you avoid sending a blind pitch — and it could end up giving you the intel you need to draft a piece that will appeal to that editor.

3. Understand That You're Writing On Spec

It takes time to write an effective op-ed. But you have to invest that time with the understanding that your piece might not be accepted. Ultimately, you need to invest that time in writing a strong piece for it to get considered, so resist the urge to cut corners. If you can't afford to take the time to produce a high-quality piece, your chances of success are low.

4. Don't Be Afraid to Ghostwrite

Newspapers typically won't accept op-eds that are written by a director of communications or spokesperson. Your piece will need to come from an expert in the issue you're discussing — most likely your top executive or another official within your organization. Often, these folks don't have hours to devote to writing an op-ed on spec. So you'll likely need to draft the piece yourself under another person's byline — or hire an outside ghostwriter to work with the expert to create a strong draft.

5. Make It About Your Mission

Most news outlets will not publish op-eds that are promotional in nature. As a result, a piece about why people should support your organization or attend your fundraising dinner isn't likely to fly. Instead, you need to focus on an issue or problem. Think about your mission and what you're trying to accomplish and develop topics that build off of your mission. If you're working on anti-poverty initiatives, for instance, consider writing about the root causes of poverty or effective programs.

6. Find Creative Ways to Position Your Point of View

Identify a creative angle or framework for your piece to increase your chances of success. For example, if you work for a nonprofit that specializes in early-childhood education, you could offer advice to a newly elected official on how to address that issue. You can also look for opportunities to offer insights into new research or explore the implications of a new report or Census data that relates to your cause.

7. Illustrate With Real Stories

While it might be tempting to load your op-ed with data, keep in mind that people are more likely to remember human stories than they are hard figures. As a result, try to find ways to incorporate anecdotes and stories into your piece to help give it added punch.

8. Keep It Short

Most newspapers and websites aren't looking for lengthy opinion pieces. They expect writers to keep their opinion submissions short — often in the neighborhood of 800 to 1,000 words. Newspapers, of course, have limited space, so they need to fit as much as they can into their limited real estate. But even though the web offers unlimited space, attention spans are short. So your pieces should be, as well. Jennifer Finney Boyer of the New York Times recommends that if you send a piece that's longer than what the outlet usually publishes, that you include in your cover letter that the piece can be cut.

9. Be Ready for Dissenting Views

If your piece discusses a controversial topic, be prepared for a negative response from some readers. Your piece might prompt nasty online comments or angry letter to the editor. Be ready for blowback — and develop a plan for how you'll respond. This is a good problem to have, since it means that your piece was not only published, but it also struck a nerve. But have a plan in place for how you'd like to engage those who disagree.

10. Remember to Repurpose

If you are fortunate enough to get your piece published, make sure you have a plan for promoting it on your website and through your social-media channels — and freely encourage your board members and other supporters to help you spread the word. Since you wrote the piece, you might even be able to cross-post it to your blog or edit it to submit it to other outlets. And if it doesn't get accepted, make sure your time and effort isn't wasted. Use the piece in your own channels or pitch it somewhere else!

Peter Panepento is principal at Panepento Strategies, a full-service content, digital, and social strategy firm for nonprofits and socially-minded companies. He was formerly an assistant managing editor at The Chronicle of Philanthropy and a senior vice president at The Council on Foundations. He also serves as Nonprofit Marketing Guide's adviser on public relations.

LOCAL MEDIA CONTACTS

(As of February 1, 2019)

Media staffing changes frequently, so you will need to check to make sure the individuals listed are still around:

Inland Valley Daily Bulletin, San Bernardino Sun, Riverside Press-Enterprise, Redlands Daily Facts:

Jessica Keating, Local News Editor (San Bernardino County): (909) 386-3810, jkeating@scng.com

Mark Acosta, Local News Editor (Riverside County): (951) 368-9362, macosta@scng.com

Betty Tyler, Community Page Editor: (909) 259-9324, btyler@scng.com

Salvador Rodriguez, Editorial Page Editor: (714) 796-3644, srodriguez@scng.com

Victorville Daily Press:

Steve Hunt, Editor: (760) 951-6270, shunt@vvdailynews.com

Palm Springs Desert Sun:

Julie Makinen, Executive Editor: (760) 778-4411, julie.makinen@desertsun.com

Geraldine Estevez, Social News Reporter: (760) 778-4699, geraldine.estevez@desertsun.com

Al Franco, Opinion Editor: (760) 778-4727, al.franco@desertsun.com

Los Angeles Times/Foothills Reader:

Steve O'Sullivan, Editor: (909) 973-7524, osullivanmedia@aol.com

InlandEmpire.us:

Jon Burgess, Publisher: (909) 798-7092x103, news@inlandempire.us

The Voice:

Paulette Brown-Hinds, Publisher: (909) 830-1827, paulette@voicemediaventures.com

Inland Empire Community News:

Maryjoy Duncan, Managing Editor: (909) 381-9898x207, iecn1@mac.com

Highland Community News:

James Folmer, Editor: (909) 862-1771, editor@highlandnews.net

Yucaipa/Calimesa News Mirror:

Rachel Gustuson, Editor: (909) 797-9101, rgustuson@newsmirror.net

Colton Courier:

Anthony Victoria, Reporter: victoriaanthony91@gmail.com

Fontana Herald News:

Russ Ingold, Editor: (909) 822-2231, ringold@fontanaheraldnews.com

Hispanic Lifestyle:

Richard Sandoval: (951) 640-1146, rds@hispaniclifestyle.com

Inland Valley News:

Kim Anthony, Reporter: (909) 985-0072, kim@inlandvalleynews.com

The Voice:

Paulette Brown-Hinds, Publisher: (909) 830-1827, paulette@voicemediaventures.com

Precinct Reporter:

Brian Townsend, Editor: (909) 889-0597, news@precinctreporter.com

Westside Story:

Lita Pezant, Editor: (909) 384-8131, mail@estsidestorynewspaper.com

ABC7:

Rob McMillan, IE Reporter: (909) 830-1827, rob.m.mcmillan@abc.com

Leticia Juarez, IE Reporter: (818) 863-7642, leticia.a.juarez@abc.com

Spectrum News 1:

Kristen Lago, Reporter: (424) 397-7829, kristen.lago@charter.com

KCAL/KCBS TV:

Elaine Ledesma, Assignment Editor: (818) 655-2321, emledesma@cbs.com

KNBC TV:

Marla Fain, Assignment Editor: (818) 684-3939, marla.fain@nbcuni.com

KTLA TV:

Vance Scott, Assignment Manager: (323) 460-5500, vance.scott@ktla.com

KESQ/KUNA TV (Palm Springs):

Rebecca Johnson, News Director: (760) 773-0342, rebecca.johnon@kesq.com

KVCR:

kvcnews@gmail.com