

## Knight Media Forum 2024 - Urgent Call to Invest in News for Thriving Communities

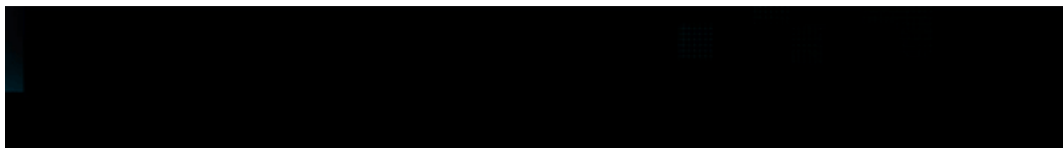


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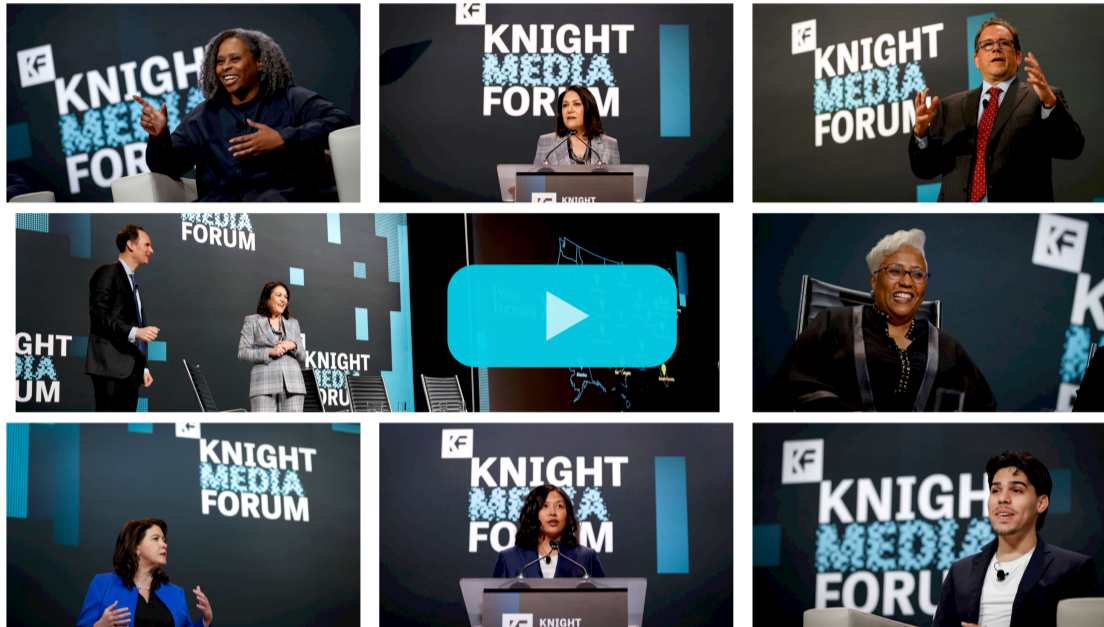
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Knight Media Forum 2024 delivered a call to action first heralded at the inaugural convening 17 years ago: The time to invest in news is now. A thriving democracy requires informed and engaged communities.



[Replay the highlights in 'Knight Media Forum 2024 in Four Minutes'](#)

Knight Foundation's seventh president and CEO, Maribel Pérez Wadsworth, took center stage opening and closing the convening.

Recalling her decades in newsrooms and in senior business roles in innovation and strategy, she spoke about how technology brought both new tools for creating journalism and connecting with audiences, but also disruption and challenges to the business model that once supported the field.

*"We are in it with you, and together we will crack the code of sustainability."*

*- Knight president & CEO, Maribel Pérez Wadsworth*

Despite Knight's significant investments – three hundred million dollars – on top of the \$632 million Knight has invested in journalism since 2005 – the work is far from done, she said to the group of industry leaders. "We are in it with you, and together we will crack the code of sustainability." You can read her full remarks [here](#).



***Knight Foundation CEO: to preserve democracy, philanthropy must move at speed of news | Opinion***

BY MARIBEL PÉREZ WADSWORTH  
FEBRUARY 20, 2024 7:01 AM



Maribel Pérez Wadsworth, born in Miami, is the new president and CEO of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. GREG SCHILLING/Knight Foundation

Wadsworth also made a number of announcements.

She welcomed the president of MacArthur Foundation John Palfrey to the stage to talk about [Press Forward](#), the \$500 million effort to revitalize local news. They jointly recognized the inaugural Executive Director of the philanthropic effort, [Dale Anglin](#), and announced a new set of local Press Forward chapters.



She also unveiled the [Pew-Knight Initiative](#). With the goal of developing a deeper understanding of how disruptions in today's news environment are fundamentally changing the way people consume information, Knight Foundation and Pew Research Center have committed \$20 million dollars.

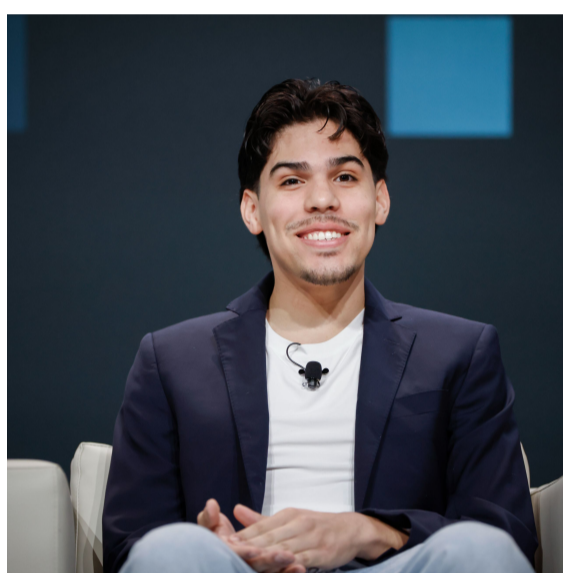


Among the hundreds of attendees, including funders, philanthropists, community foundation leaders, and media innovators, there was a palpable sense of urgency. Continuing announcements of layoffs and closures throughout the media industry, combined with environmental challenges, increasing polarization, and declining trust, has made the need to address the gaps in the information ecosystem more pressing.

To address these needs, KMF offered a range of discussions.



Local news publishers shared how they have diversified revenue streams by investing in practical tools. Panelists called for empowerment of local journalism, emphasizing the need for newsrooms to reflect the communities they serve. Attendees got a taste of what it took for three courageous whistleblowers to exercise their right to free speech, and reveal vital information in the public interest.



Content creators who have amassed millions of followers on Instagram and TikTok spoke about how they weigh their responsibilities as information providers, and civic leaders from Detroit and the Federal Emergency Management Association talked about community innovation and resilience building.

Overall, the program focused on challenging the group to commit to new efforts and investments that ensure the reliable flow of information that enable communities to thrive – with urgency.

"The best time for solutions was yesterday, as the saying goes — but the next best time is right now," Wadsworth reminded attendees. "It is time — now — for philanthropy to move at the speed of news."

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***Playback all of the sessions, see photos and other highlights, and more on the [KMF24 homepage](#).***

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