

Funders unite to support local news in NC



From Charles Thomas, Knight Foundation <web@knightfoundation.org>

To Stephen <sjohnston@tuesdayforumcharlotte.org>

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Dear Stephen,

Twenty-eight North Carolinians joined hundreds of philanthropists and news innovators from across the country for the 17th annual Knight Media Forum (KMF). The convening, held in Miami, centered around [Press Forward](#), a half-billion-dollar effort launched to address local news gaps. It's a vision led by Knight Foundation and the MacArthur Foundation, which includes inspiring local philanthropic hubs to support journalism.



Last summer the Charlotte Journalism Collaborative and North Carolina Local News Workshop [convened](#) funders, news leaders and supporters to talk about the crucial role of philanthropy for local news. That's one reason why our state was identified as an ideal place to launch a Press Forward local chapter.

In case you missed it, you can watch the forum's recorded sessions [here](#). There are additional details below.

Sincerely,
Charles

North Carolina Is Named a Press Forward Local Chapter



As local newsrooms continue to disappear across America and misinformation

surges, a group of funders has come together to breathe new life into local news—and a group of North Carolinians are among them. The [North Carolina News Lab Fund](#), founded in 2017 to support "local journalism, local stories, and local people," will house the fund led by the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust and Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation. Press Forward North Carolina is one of 17 local chapters. Read more [here](#).

"In North Carolina and nationally, more funders are connecting the dots between supporting strong local journalism and advancing their overall impact," said Lizzy Hazeltine, director of the North Carolina Local News Lab Fund. "In collaboration with Press Forward, we're committed to bringing more funders into the fold in service of communities."



Charlotte Leaders Advocate for Local Journalism at KMF24

It was great to see Charlottean Alicia Bell, director of Borealis Philanthropy's Racial Equity in Journalism Fund, on the KMF24 main stage for a session on empowering local journalism, and Alvaro Gudián of Charlotte's [La Noticia](#) speak about financial sustainability in local news in a breakout session.



Alicia Bell, Borealis Philanthropy (right) and S.Mitra Kalita, URL Media (left) at KMF24. Credit: Eva Marie Uzcátegui and Marco Bello for Knight Foundation.

Knight's Commitment to Libraries: Empowering Innovation and Community Engagement

Marcellus Turner of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library and Jenni Gaisbauer and Gene Cochrane of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Foundation joined more than thirty public library leaders to discuss a range of topics, including book banning and the ongoing challenges related to the adaptation of new technology. They had an opportunity to meet with Knight's new president and CEO Maribel Pérez Wadsworth, who reminded the group how committed the foundation is to their work.





From left: Marcellus Turner, Alisa Evans (Knight Foundation), Charles Thomas (Knight Foundation), Jenni Gaisbauer, Gene Cochrane. Credit: Eva Marie Uzcátegui and Marco Bello for Knight Foundation.

Thanks to all the Charlotteans who attended KMF24

Rana Cash (The Charlotte Observer), Alvaro Gudián (La Noticia), Hilda Gurdian (La Noticia), Glenn Burkins (QCity Metro), Jim Yarbrough (Qnotes), Jennifer Lang (WFAE 90.7 FM), Amy Lehtonen Moran (WCNC-Charlotte), Martha Yesowitch (Charlotte Mecklenburg Library), Nicole Hoerschelmann (Knight School of Communication at Queens University), Chris Rudisill (Charlotte Journalism Collaborative), Shannan Bowen (NC Local News Workshop), Tony Mecia (Charlotte Ledger), Federico Rios (Foundation For The Carolinas), Alicia Bell (Racial Equity in Journalism Fund, Borealis Philanthropy), Erica Beshears Perel (Center for Innovation and Sustainability in Local Media, UNC), Nation Hahn (EducationNC)

Charlotte artist, photographer and curator **David Butler** was featured on Knight's socials during Black History Month for his work empowering Black artists in Charlotte. Watch [here](#).

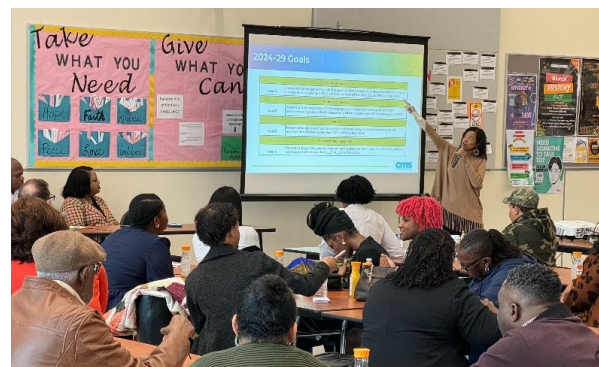


New Documentary Examines Mental Health and the Criminal Justice System in North Carolina

Fractured looks into the experiences of defendants with serious mental illnesses in North Carolina jails who are too sick to stand trial. Partly supported by Knight, the documentary is a collaboration between WFAE, FRONTLINE & Firelight Media. Stream it online [here](#). There will be a screening and conversation at the Dubois Center at UNC Charlotte Center City on March 12 at 7 p.m. EST. For tickets, visit www.wfae.org/fracturedtickets.

The State of Our Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

Superintendent Chrystal Hill visited the Historic West End for a Town Hall where she answered questions from residents about student safety, mental health and academic outcomes. The event was held by the Northwest Corridor Council of Elders' Education, as part of a partnership with Knight



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Foundation. Watch WSOC-TV's report
on the visit [here](#).



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