Journalists connect us.

2020 Fourth Estate Award Gala

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NATIONAL PRESS CLUB JOURNALISM INSTITUTE

AND CONGRATULATES ALL OF THE 2020 NPCJI AWARD WINNERS.
Welcome!

This year’s Fourth Estate celebration brings together journalists, communicators, and supporters from around the world to recognize excellence in a year of unprecedented challenges.

Tonight, we honor:

**Susan Zirinsky**, President and Senior Executive Producer, CBS News
Fourth Estate Award winner

**Maria Ressa**, CEO and President, Rappler
John Aubuchon Press Freedom Award (international)

**Linda Tirado**, freelance author and photojournalist
John Aubuchon Press Freedom Award (domestic)

**Ed Yong**, Staff Writer, The Atlantic
Neil and Susan Sheehan Award for Investigative Journalism

And in this extraordinary year, we honor all of our colleagues in the field and the profession of journalism itself. Whether covering the pandemic, the presidential campaign and local elections, or the growing national outcry for racial equality and social justice, the work of our colleagues this year has reminded Americans and others around the world every day of the vital role of the press in our democracy. Thank you for your outstanding and courageous efforts.

This evening also connects us to our history. In the studio with us tonight is the microphone that Edward R. Murrow used for his CBS Radio broadcasts from London during World War II. It is the microphone through which broadcast journalism was born, on loan to the National Press Club from the Murrow family.

We also celebrate the future with this year’s scholarship winners and journalism graduates of the Class of 2020, who persevered to make their way to newsrooms and other places journalists are needed most.

We are grateful to the members of the National Press Club Board of Governors, the Board of Directors of the National Press Club Journalism Institute, the Fourth Estate Awards selection committee, and our Sponsorship Committee led by Rob Stoddard. We celebrate together because of their hard work. Thank you to the sponsors whose messages of congratulations you’ll see in the pages that follow. Their support makes our work possible. And you, dear journalists, make our mission meaningful. Thank you, and here’s to a memorable evening!
CONGRATULATIONS

SUSAN ZIRINSKY
PRESIDENT & SENIOR EXECUTIVE PRODUCER, CBS NEWS

2020 NATIONAL PRESS CLUB
FOURTH ESTATE AWARD
RECIPIENT

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Tonight's program

WELCOME
Michael Freedman, Journalist in Residence at University of Maryland Global Campus, Executive Producer of The Kalb Report, and 2020 President of the National Press Club

THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB JOURNALISM INSTITUTE’S MISSION
Angela Greiling Keane, Managing Editor for States and Canada at POLITICO and 2020 President of the National Press Club Journalism Institute

THE JOHN AUBUCHON FREEDOM OF THE PRESS AWARD
Named in honor of 2003 National Press Club President John Aubuchon, this award acknowledges those who have worked to advance the cause of press freedom and transparency. Honorees will be introduced by John Donnelly, chairperson of the National Press Club Freedom of the Press Committee.

DOMESTIC HONOREE
Linda Tirado, Freelance journalist

INTERNATIONAL HONOREE
Maria Ressa, CEO and President, The Rappler

THE NEIL AND SUSAN SHEEHAN AWARD FOR INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM
The award recognizes work that reflects a commitment to the principle that a vibrant democracy depends on an informed citizenry and a free press. The award promotes the practice of investigative journalism exemplifying compassion, courage and integrity.

Ed Yong Staff Writer, The Atlantic

FOURTH ESTATE AWARD
Each year, the esteemed Fourth Estate Award honors the person whom the National Press Club’s Board of Governors decides has achieved distinction for a lifetime of contributions to American journalism.

Susan Zirinsky, President and Senior Executive Producer, CBS News

THANK YOU, AND GOOD NIGHT
Michael Freedman and Angela Greiling Keane
A history of honoring excellence

The National Press Club confers the annual Fourth Estate Award on the person who, in the judgment of the NPC Board of Governors, has achieved distinction for a lifetime of contributions to American journalism. Recommendations are made by a distinguished committee representing all branches of news media.

PREVIOUS FOURTH ESTATE AWARD HONOREES

2019: Amanda Bennett, Voice of America
2017: Tony Kornheiser & Michael Wilbon, ESPN
2016: Wolf Blitzer, CNN
2015: Gwen Ifill, PBS Newshour
2013: Andrea Mitchell, NBC News
2011: Jim Lehrer, PBS NewsHour
2010: Bob Schieffer, CBS News
2008: Christiane Amanpour, CNN
2006: Marvin Kalb, The Joan Shorenstein Center for Press and Public Policy, Harvard University
2005: Austin Kiplinger, Kiplinger Washington Editors
2003: Tom Brokaw, NBC Nightly News
2002: Brian Lamb, C-SPAN
2001: Robert D. Novak, Syndicated Columnist
2000: Jack W. Germond, The Baltimore Sun
1999: Carl T. Rowan, Syndicated Columnist
1997: James M. Perry, The Wall Street Journal
1996: Charles R. McDowell, The Richmond Times-Dispatch
1994: Charles Kuralt, CBS News
1993: Eugene Roberts, The Philadelphia Inquirer
1991: Peter Arnett, Cable News Network
1990: Mike Royko, Chicago Tribune
1987: David Brinkley, ABC News
1986: Art Buchwald, Syndicated Columnist
1984: Helen Thomas, United Press International
1983: Eric Severeid, CBS News
1981: Nick B. Williams, Los Angeles Times
1980: Theodore H. White, Author
1979: Clayton Kirkpatrick, Chicago Tribune
1976: John S. Knight, Knight-Ridder Newspapers
1973: Walter Cronkite, CBS News
About Susan Zirinsky, CBS News President
Fourth Estate Award honoree

Susan Zirinsky is President and Senior Executive Producer of CBS News, a position she began on March 1, 2019.

Within her first nine months, Zirinsky oversaw an overhaul of the news division, including launching the CBS EVENING NEWS WITH NORAH O’DONNELL and moving the broadcast to Washington, D.C., where it is the only broadcast network nightly newscast to be based in the nation’s capital. She has re-imagined the CBS THIS MORNING anchor team with co-hosts Gayle King, Anthony Mason and Tony Dokoupil and has further integrated the linear and digital newsrooms to continue to grow CBS News’ multi-platform presence. She also named new executive leadership and several new executive producers of flagship programs including 60 MINUTES, CBS THIS MORNING, CBS EVENING NEWS, 48 HOURS, and a newly created CBS NEWS SPECIAL EVENTS unit.

Zirinsky, an acclaimed journalist and highly respected senior executive producer at CBS News, began her career in the CBS News Washington bureau two weeks after the Watergate break-in. Over the next four decades she produced a wide variety of award-winning documentaries and programs, and she covered a range of historic stories, from the Gulf War to the student uprising in Tiananmen Square, from the White House for 10 years to the 9/11 attacks, and from the Paris terrorist attacks to the mass shooting at a Parkland, Fla. School.

Prior to taking on her new role, Zirinsky was the senior executive producer of the award-winning 48 HOURS and was responsible for numerous CBS News breaking news specials. She was also the senior executive producer of 48 HOURS: NCIS and the senior executive producer of the CBS primetime series WHISTLEBLOWER.

A prolific producer on a variety of issues and subjects, her work has been lauded by critics and honored by her peers with journalism’s top honors, including Emmys, the Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Award and the George Foster Peabody Award.

Zirinsky brings to the position extensive experience leading teams of investigative journalists, building and developing new non-fiction programs; creating innovative ways to report news; and mentoring and guiding the careers of some of the industry’s brightest journalists.

Zirinsky graduated cum laude from American University in Washington, D.C. The AU School of Communication honored her with the Dean’s Award in 2018.

Susan Zirinsky is the personification of journalistic perseverance, tenacity, and integrity. We are proud to honor her achievements — and that’s the way it is." National Press Club President Michael Freedman
CONGRATULATES SUSAN ZIRINSKY AND ALL 2020 HONOREES AND PROUDLY SUPPORTS THE CRITICAL WORK OF THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB JOURNALISM INSTITUTE
HI EVERYONE.

Above all else, work to the highest possible standard, always: Protect your work and your work will protect you. • **Be professional**: File your copy on time, to word count. • **Park downhill** at the end of the day, leaving a sentence or paragraph or piece unfinished so you don't wake to an empty screen. • **Cherish good editors**: Don't be precious about your words, and find the people who make your words better. • Actively deconstruct the work of good journalists in an attempt to decipher and reverse-engineering what makes their writing sing. • Pay attention to structure, and learn how to report well; remember that **most writing problems are actually structuring problems**, and most structuring problems are actually reporting problems. • Embrace nuance, and convey uncertainty. **Ignore easy answers** in search for deeper truths, but don't fall prey to cheap contrarianism. • Recognize that you will often know relatively little about what you're writing about, so **be humble**, and learn interview techniques that will delineate, probe, and stretch the limits of your own knowledge. • Be accurate and nuanced, but **know when to let a piece go** and move on to the next thing. • Note that **it is better to be right than to be first**, but it's nice to be both. • Remember that you're not writing to impress your sources or other journalists; you're writing to help your readers make sense of the world. Take that responsibility seriously; view journalism as a profession and a craft whose standards you must uphold. • **Prize thoughtfulness over salaciousness, depth over volume, light over heat.** When you make mistakes, correct them quickly and transparently. • Remember that women exist, that minorities exist, that disabled and queer and trans people exist; interview them, tell their stories, and **don't do what the majority of journalists do which is to disproportionately give voice to loud white men**. • Judge your peers for the quality of their work, rather than judging their work based on who they are; aim to be judged according to the same standard. • **Give your loyalty to people and not to institutions**; the former probably care about you and the latter probably do not. • Be extremely mindful about how you use social media, reaping in all its benefits as a reporting tool while skirted around its pitfalls as an emotional void. • **Be cautious about all the advice you receive**, including this, recognizing that everyone is speaking to you from some combination of luck and privilege. • **Recognize your own luck and privilege**, and work to uplift others around you. • Accrue social capital so you can spend it on people. • **Be bold. Be fearless. Be kind.** Be kind to yourself. • Good luck.
About Ed Yong, staff writer for The Atlantic

Neil and Susan Sheehan Award for Investigative Reporting honoree

This award recognizes work that best reflects the Sheehans' extraordinary commitment to the principle that a vibrant democracy depends on an informed citizenry and a free press.

Ed Yong is a science journalist who reports for The Atlantic, and is based in Washington, D.C. His work appears on The Atlantic’s website and its print magazine; it has also been featured in National Geographic, the New Yorker, Wired, Nature, New Scientist, Scientific American, and many more publications.

He has won several awards, including the Victor Cohn Prize for medical science reporting in 2020; the Michael E. DeBakey Journalism Award for biomedical reporting in 2016; the Byron H. Waksman Award for Excellence in the Public Communication of Life Sciences in 2016; and the National Academies Keck Science Communication Award in 2010. He regularly does talks and interviews, and his TED talk on mind-controlling parasites has been watched by over 1.5 million people.

He spent much of 2020 covering the COVID-19 pandemic, and is consequently very tired. He has a Chatham Island black robin named after him.
Proud Sponsor of 2020 Fourth Estate Award Gala

Amidst our challenging times due the COVID pandemic, journalists around the world are struggling to carry out their jobs to inform and increase public awareness of the key issues that affect our turbulent times. They continue to do so in the face of unrelenting restrictions and harassment by governments.

According to Reporters without Borders, as of March 2020, there are 320 journalists detained across the globe. These figures include 202 professional journalists; 107 citizen journalists; and 17 other media professionals.

Egypt continues to be one of the leading violators of press freedom. Of those detained in Egypt is Al Jazeera journalist, Mahmoud Hussein, who continues to languish in prison, and has completed more than 1400 days behind bars. Hussein was arrested in December 2016 during a visit to his family in Cairo, and has been imprisoned, without charge, trial or conviction in sight.

In addition to incarcerating Mahmoud Hussein, the Egyptian regime has also sentenced in absentia six additional Al Jazeera journalists; two renowned British journalists and four Egyptian journalists, all of whom were tried and sentenced to ten years each. As a result, our journalists continue to live in constant fear of being detained, arrested and deported to Egypt when traveling around the world.

Mahmoud contracted COVID-19 recently whilst in prison and fortunately recovered. But his health situation is a clear indicator that the risk of transmission and reinfection in crowded prison conditions remains imminent and the consequences could be fatal. Combined with little to no medical attention in many prisons and the health threats aligned with COVID-19 that may need immediate and drastic emergency health care, we believe the time has come for the international community to pressure all governments to free unjustly detained journalists and reaffirm the importance of media freedom and expression.

Amid this pandemic, we implore all industry professionals to allow their voices to be heard and join our call to stand up for Mahmoud Hussein and all detained journalists, demanding their immediate release.

At Al Jazeera we stand firmly in solidarity with all our imprisoned colleagues; we will continue to hold the line with Maria Ressa and all our harassed and intimidated colleagues whilst also upholding the pennant of truth. We believe that no journalist should be intimidated, persecuted or imprisoned for carrying out their duty. We believe in the fundamental right to freedom of speech and that it is the basic pillar pivotal to upholding the values of democracy.

The safety of journalists should be addressed as a global priority, and freedom of expression should not be regarded as a luxury but rather as a fundamental right.

We implore you to Stand up for Mahmoud Hussein. Your support will go a long way to break-down the walls of silence and make a critical difference, allowing him to return to his family and loved ones.
About **Linda Tirado**, author & freelance photojournalist
John Aubuchon Press Freedom Award honoree

*Named for a former Club president who fervently advocated for press freedom, this award is given each year to an honoree in the United States and an honoree overseas who bravely pushes to disclose the truth in trying circumstances.*

**DOMESTIC HONOREE**

**Linda Tirado**, an author and freelance photographer, was taking pictures of a street protest in Minneapolis on May 30 when a policeman’s foam bullet hit her left eye, costing Tirado most of her sight in that eye. Tirado is among the journalists around the country who were injured, harassed or arrested while covering protests that took place nationwide after the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

About **Maria Ressa**, CEO of Rappler
John Aubuchon Press Freedom Award honoree

**INTERNATIONAL HONOREE**

**Maria Ressa**, CEO and President of Rappler, was convicted in the Philippines on trumped-up charges of cyber libel. Ressa and Rappler have been the target of repeated efforts by the government of President Rodrigo Duterte to silence them. Ressa has emerged as one of the leading voices for press freedom in the Philippines amid threats to independent journalism in the country.
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"The approach makes clear this information is intended for me. It also feels like a connection to a community that is of extreme value to me. Especially in these times."

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Say their names out loud. Silence will not end systemic racism and injustice.

The status quo means the list of names will only grow. These senseless killings must push us to confront the racial inequities that have long plagued our nation.

Solidarity must take many forms and we pledge to continuously speak truth to power, demand justice and hold the powerful to account.

We hear you. We see you. Black lives matter.

Get involved at gannett.com/takeaction
Support journalism. Donate today.

Even journalists need a reminder: Your work makes a difference. You can make a difference for journalists around the globe by making a financial contribution to the National Press Club Journalism Institute today. Your dollars directly support meaningful programs and initiatives that build skills and deepen the connections journalists have with their communities.

Donors who give **$100 or more today** will receive a signed 5x7-inch print of this visual reminder that journalists connect communities, drawn by writer and cartoonist [Liza Donnelly](http://www.lixad.com/) exclusively for the 2020 Fourth Estate Award Gala.

[pressclubinstitute.org/support](http://pressclubinstitute.org/support)

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About Liza Donnelly

[Liza Donnelly](http://www.lixad.com/) is a writer and cartoonist with The New Yorker Magazine, where she has provided commentary on culture and politics for over 40 years. As an on-air contributor to CBS News, Donnelly created political cartoons and live-drew cultural and political events. She writes for The New York Times and CNN Opinion pages, The Washington Post, Forbes, Politico, Ms. Magazine, and Medium, where she has a regular column on politics.

A respected voice for women’s rights and free speech, Donnelly delivered a TED talk that has been translated into 40 languages, receiving over 1.4 million views online. She has spoken at the United Nations in New York and Geneva, The New Yorker Festival, numerous TEDxes, universities, NGOs and corporate venues in the US and abroad. Donnelly has been a Cultural Envoy for the U.S. State Department, speaking about current events abroad. Author of 17 books, she is primarily known for her history *Funny Ladies: The New Yorker’s Greatest Women Cartoonists*; an updated edition is to be published in 2021.

Donnelly is the innovator of a new form of digital visual journalism, wherein she draws events in real time and shares online. For CBS News, CNN and The New Yorker, she covered the DNC in 2016, and the 2017 Inauguration, White House Press conferences, political marches; and she is the first cartoonist to be credentialed to the Academy Awards, five years in a row. She currently broadcasts daily commentary and live drawing for Instagram and HappsTV.

A native Washingtonian, Donnelly is currently based in New York.
Thank you to our gracious table hosts

Amanda Bennett, 2019 Fourth Estate Award honoree & former director of Voice of America
Barbara Cochran, National Press Club Journalism Institute past president & professor emeritus of the Missouri School of Journalism
Tinsley Davis, program partner & executive director for the National Association of Science Writers
John Donnelly, National Press Club press freedom chairperson & senior writer for CQ Roll Call
Jill Geisler, National Press Club Journalism Institute leadership columnist & Bill Plante Chair in Leadership and Media Integrity at Loyola University Chicago
Jim Kuhnenn, past Press Freedom Fellow for the National Press Club Journalism Institute
Rob Stoddard, 2020 Fourth Estate Award Gala volunteer & senior vice president for Industry & Association Affairs at NCTA – The Internet & Television Association
Donna Leinwand Leger, National Press Foundation chairperson & senior advisor for Stanton Communications
Yolanda Lopez, director for Voice of America’s News Center
Lisa Matthews, National Press Club vice president & U.S. video assignment manager for The Associated Press
Tom McMahon, managing director for the Aspel Group
Paul Minehart, National Press Club Journalism Institute board member & head of corporate communications, North America at Syngenta
Rachel Oswald, National Press Club professional development chairperson & staff writer for CQ Roll Call
Danny Selnick, National Press Club communicator team chairperson
Emily Wilkins, National Press Club secretary & congressional reporter for Bloomberg Government

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Congratulations to

SUSAN ZIRINSKY
President and Senior Executive Producer of CBS News

Recipient of the

2020 NATIONAL PRESS CLUB FOURTH ESTATE AWARD

We celebrate Susan and all the award honorees for their contributions to American journalism and press freedom.

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Meet the 2020-21 scholarship recipients

SHIRLEY AND DENNIS FELDMAN FELLOWSHIP FOR STUDIES IN JOURNALISM
The award recognizes a student pursuing graduate studies in journalism and is a one-time scholarship of $5,000.

Derek Schwabe of Morada, California, is the first data journalist to receive the Feldman Award. Schwabe is studying development economics, policy, and natural resource management, with a concentration in journalism using digital communications and storytelling in the interdisciplinary Master of Development Practice program at the University of California at Berkeley.

Derek is a 30-year-old international development policy analyst who has studied and written about food insecurity and climate change, as well as their fallout on various populations and communities.

"One tangible way we help is by investing in the next generation of reporters and industry leaders and this year's scholarship recipients certainly represent our best and brightest. They have already shown perseverance and tenacity in their personal journeys and each has demonstrated having the courage of their convictions.

National Press Club President Michael Freedman

JULIE SCHOO SCHOLARSHIP FOR DIVERSITY IN JOURNALISM
The award recognizes a graduating high school senior and totals as much as $20,000 over four years.

Laila Nasher of Detroit, Michigan, attended a high school without journalism resources. So, in her words: “I had to make do.” Nasher started a newspaper, called “Eagles Uncensored,” then became a Detroit Free Press intern. She also was accepted in Princeton’s Summer Journalism Program. “My commitment to journalism stems from a personal obligation to tell the stories of those who live in environments my family fled,” she wrote.

Nasher wants to become a correspondent in the Middle East to report on civilians and how they are impacted by U.S. foreign policy. She attends Harvard University.

RICHARD G. ZIMMERMANN AWARD
The award recognizes a graduating high school senior and is a one-time scholarship for $5,000.

Christina Walker of Stockbridge, Georgia, has built her own brand as a TV broadcaster producing mature, thoughtful and unusual stories on sports as a high school student and athlete. Walker created a YouTube channel called ChristinaGirlsHoops TV “to uplift, inspire, and empower girls nationwide,” and push back against the continuing “marginalization of women.” Walker has interviewed many leading women’s sports stars, and has “turned their stories into larger narratives.” Christina has won invitations to events at the White House, the McDonald’s All-American Games, and the NCAA Women’s Basketball Final Four.

Walker attends Washington University of St. Louis, where she plans to expand her writing abilities to accompany her YouTube TV and photography skills.

Donate to scholarships today: pressclubinstitute.org/support
CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2020 FOURTH ESTATE AWARD HONOREES

We celebrate you, your service and all others dedicated to independent and free press.
Congratulations to Susan Zirinsky, recipient of the National Press Club's 2020 Fourth Estate Award.

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"A trustworthy press is the immune system of democracy."

- Craig Newmark, craigslist founder
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The National Press Club Journalism Institute thanks the following sponsors, without whom the gala experience would not be possible. Their generosity ensures the Institute will continue to serve journalists meaningfully in the coming year.

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Michael and Renee Freedman
CONGRATULATIONS

Susan Zirinsky!

The Gaylord College of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Oklahoma is proud of our association with the National Press Club Journalism Institute.

Thanks to a grant from the Inasmuch Foundation, a group of Gaylord College students reports from Washington for news outlets — digital, broadcast and print — in Oklahoma every semester under the direction of journalist Gil Klein, former National Press Club president. We are indebted to NPC President Michael Freedman and others in the club for their unwavering support of our students.
Sharing experiences.
Growing together.

Thank you to these incredible instructors who devoted their time and expertise to growing our field during one of the most challenging years for us all. You showed us how to work — and feel — better, a little more each day.
Meet the Leadership

MICHAEL FREEDMAN
National Press Club president
Executive Producer of the Kalb Report public broadcasting series and journalist-in-residence at University of Maryland Global Campus

ANGELA GREILING KEANE
National Press Club Journalism Institute president
POLITICO’s Managing Editor for States and Canada and a National Press Club past president

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National Press Club Journalism Institute staff
Julie Moos, executive director; Beth Francesco, senior director; Holly Butcher Grant, learning manager
If it's important to journalists, it's important to us.

The Journalism Institute isn’t afraid to have tough conversations, and they prove that every day.

National Press Club member Maria Rodriguez

Through training, hosted conversations, skills exchanges and behind-the-scenes media reporting, growing craft, career and community is at the heart of what we do at the Journalism Institute.

Instructors have donated more than 77 hours of their time to share their expertise on topics including interviewing, writing, leadership, coronavirus coverage, and more.

Expert-led discussions on topics including antiracism, uncovering unheard voices & empowering communities have drawn 4,317 participants from around the globe.

With a 34% open rate and 30% click-through rate, readers tell us the Institute’s daily newsletter delivers the information they need. Our “Writing Through” writing group gives nonfiction authors the opportunity to sharpen their skills and commune for support.

Through amicus briefs, support statements, letter-writing campaigns & individual outreach, the Institute consistently supports journalists in peril.

Pressclubinstitute.org
institute@press.org
The National Press Club Journalism Institute promotes an engaged global citizenry through an independent and free press, and equips journalists with skills and standards to inform the public in ways that inspire civic engagement. As the non-profit affiliate of the National Press Club, the Institute serves as a beacon for journalism in the public interest.

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