

Subject: Knight Foundation Inquiry#:3011

Date: 12/31/2006, 8:18 PM

From: newschallenge@knightfdn.org

To: judgewatchers@aol.com

21st Century News Challenge Inquiry Confirmation

Dear Ms. Sassower:

Thank you for submitting the inquiry below. It has been received by Knight Foundation and has been given tracking number 3011.

Your inquiry will be reviewed by our staff for fit and interest. You will receive feedback on your request within two weeks. We will communicate our decision by contacting you at the following e-mail address: judgewatchers@aol.com.

If you have questions concerning your inquiry, please contact us at newschallenge@knightfdn.org and make sure to include your inquiry tracking number in the e-mail. Please do not send follow-up attachments to your inquiry as they will be discarded.

Sincerely,

21st Century News Challenge Staff

An initiative of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation

Submitted Date: Sunday, December 31, 2006

Inquiry ID:3011

Requested Amount: \$ 500,000 over 2 year(s)

Project Title:

LEADERSHIP: PILOT PROJECT CREATING OUR OWN JOURNALIST-STAFFED BLOG TO GO WHERE THE MEDIA WON'T: Saving our Democracy by Turning Media-Unreported Evidence into Journalism about the Corruption of Judicial Selection & Discipline & Our Public Of

What makes this idea unique?:

The answer lies in an unbelievable reality: the media has been starving the public of information about the corruption of the processes of judicial selection & discipline, involving our highest public officers, including those seeking re-election or higher public office. For more than 15 years, our non-partisan, non-profit citizens' organization, CJA, has done the heavy lifting of investigating & documenting the corruption of these vital processes, as well as of the judicial process itself, by primary-source documentary evidence, all independently verifiable. Yet, no matter how blatant the corruption is - even taking place in the presence of the press, as at judicial confirmation hearings - the media refuses to report on the evidence, even that to which it is witness. No matter that the evidence involves our highest courts & judges, state judicial conduct commissions, federal judicial disciplinary bodies, congressional judiciary & bar committees, or that it criminally implicates public officers running for our highest public offices. The media will not report, even when given the explosive evidence on a silver-platter & when verification can be accomplished literally within minutes. This extends not only to the processes of judicial selection & discipline, but to the heart-rending stories of lives crippled & destroyed by the judicial corruption resulting from these sham processes. You can verify this from CJA's website, www.judgewatch.org, via 3 sidebar panels "Press Suppression", "Elections 2006: Informing the Voters", & "Suing The New York Times" - the latter posting our first-of-its-kind public interest lawsuit against The Times for journalistic fraud based on its violations of First Amendment responsibilities relating to judicial selection & discipline, rising to a level of election-rigging. Also important: our posted correspondence to research institutes, programs, & schools purporting to examine press performance & train journalists. Such underscores the need to build honest media scholarship, as does NOT presently exist.

Who else would want to use it, and why?:

Our proposed journalist-staffed blog will TEST the accepted-as-true proposition that blogs can shape the news & traditional media - in other words, that they can be pace-setters. The yet-to-be-reported news stories are so scandalous & their political ramifications so far-reaching that such accepted proposition, IF TRUE, should force a breach in the wall that has been holding back media coverage. In any event, we have NO DOUBT that a journalist-staffed blog under our auspices - writing evidence-based stories about the kind of systemic corruption that the media has been so long suppressing, combined with profiles of the victims of judicial corruption, giving human dimension to these issues - will elicit enormous readership, reaction, & public clamor demanding reform.

Why are you the best person or organization to develop this project?:

Projects to "improve the flow of information & news in the public interest" can only be developed by persons of utmost integrity, who know that information & news can never be "in the public interest" unless it is as accurate & complete as possible - & who will sacrifice themselves to that end. I am such a person, with the "battle scars" to prove it. I am the daughter of two lawyers who saw, first-hand, as "in-the-trenches" litigators, how our cherished rule of law & any semblance of judicial "process" vanish when unfit judges are put on the bench. Both my parents tried to expose the corruption of the judicial process, to which they were witness & of which casefiles were the documentary proof, only to find that all purported "safeguards" & "checks" were worthless, including the press. Their courageous judicial whistleblowing, despite vicious retaliation by the courts, has marked most of my 50 years. Recognizing that victims of judicial misconduct have no place to turn - indeed, that the judicial and legal establishment, aided by the press, pretend that judicial corruption does not exist - my mother & I co-founded CJA in 1993 as the successor to a local non-partisan, non-profit group of which she had been director & I coordinator. CJA's goal - like its predecessor's - is to ensure that the processes of judicial selection & discipline are effective & meaningful. To this, we have committed these many years & our own resources. Our vision was to develop membership chapters in all 50 states to collect accurate, independently-verifiable information about these basically closed-door processes &, based thereon, to formulate strategies of action tailored to each state & locale. That remains our vision - one sooner realized through the potential of a journalist-staffed blog. CJA's spectacular website - having no "bells & whistles", but extraordinary, history-making content demonstrating the most exemplary citizen action and sacrifice for the common good - attests to what makes us "best" for our proposed leadership-pilot project.