



**THE
TEXAS
TRIBUNE**



The Texas Tribune was founded on the belief that by providing nonpartisan, public-service journalism, we can equip Texans with the tools to become better informed and engaged on issues affecting us all — to become more thoughtful and productive citizens — and to make this state we love smarter and healthier in the process.

This is an important time for the kind of

FACT-BASED

enterprise reporting we produce at the Tribune, maybe the most important time ever, and we couldn't be more committed to our civic-oriented mission. We take seriously our responsibility to keep a close eye on the state Legislature, and our D.C. bureau provides watchdog coverage of the Texas congressional delegation.

We are experiencing dramatic audience growth and enjoying increased support from individuals, foundations and corporations, demonstrating that more of our friends and neighbors are gaining awareness of the role we play in advancing the public interest. We thank you for your part in getting us this far, and we thank you in advance for what you'll do next to enable what we'll do next.

— **EVAN SMITH, CEO & CO-FOUNDER**

INVENTING A NEW MODEL



“We believe that civic discourse is in danger of becoming less informed and more reflexively partisan. We believe that’s bad for democracy and bad for Texas. That’s why we started The Texas Tribune.”

— JOHN THORNTON, TEXAS TRIBUNE FOUNDER

Matthew Bradford

**NONPROFIT.
NONPARTISAN.
STATEWIDE.**

Back in 2009, the number of full-time, professional journalists covering Texas politics, government and public affairs from the Capitol was in steady decline, shrinking the amount of information available to Texans about their elected representatives, their tax dollars, their government and the civic projects going on in their own hometowns. As a response to this and to the technological changes transforming the news media, John Thornton, a longtime venture capitalist in Austin and a passionate believer in public media, joined forces with Evan Smith, veteran editor-in-chief of Texas Monthly and television host, and Ross Ramsey, longtime owner and editor of Texas Weekly, the state’s premier newsletter on politics and government. Together, they set out to reinvent the business model for providing statewide news for a mass audience.

Today, the Tribune is an established leader in digital-first journalism, devoted to educating Texans through in-depth investigations, data applications, statewide events and enterprise reporting on a range of topics, including public and higher education, health and human services, immigration and the border, transportation, criminal justice, and energy and the environment. We produce robust, nonpartisan journalism, bringing greater transparency and accountability to public policy, politics and government. Our goal is to raise the level of civic engagement in communities far and wide and to return civility to our discourse on the issues that matter.

The Texas Tribune is the only member-supported, digital-first, nonpartisan news organization that informs Texans — and engages with them — about public policy, politics, government and statewide issues.

“You can’t solve big policy and political problems if you don’t know about them, and you can’t know about them unless someone tees them up. We’re here to tee them up.”

— **ROSS RAMSEY, EXECUTIVE EDITOR**

“I saw the opportunity to be part of the solution — to throw my experience and reputation behind an energetic startup with the potential to change the face of politics and policy reporting in Texas.”

— **EMILY RAMSHAW, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**

“We believed that public-service journalism is a public good, that there was not nearly enough of it in Texas and that we could help solve that problem if we put the right people in the right jobs with the right tightly focused mission and enough money in the bank.”

— **EVAN SMITH, CEO & CO-FOUNDER**

WHAT WE DO

INNOVATIVE. ENTERPRISING. ENGAGING.

On the national stage, Texas is a superlative: It's home to six of the 20 most populous cities in the country; has the 11th-largest economy in the world; produces the most crude oil of any state; has the second-highest public school enrollment and the second-highest higher ed enrollment of any state; and has the nation's largest contiguous border with Mexico. But the challenges facing the nation are magnified here, from the state's sky-high rate of uninsured people to its abysmal rankings on everything from voter turnout to high school graduation rates. On virtually every issue, and in its fast-changing demographics, Texas is a bellwether — "as Texas goes, so goes the nation."

Through the journalism we produce each day; the data sets we acquire, visualize and disseminate; and the in-person events we convene in big cities and small towns, we aim to inform as many Texans as we can about the work of elected officials, the workings of state government and the impact policymaking in the Capitol has on them.



Tribune reporters and staff travel the state to report on statewide issues that aren't covered by mainstream media and to host free events that put the public in touch with their elected officials.

Our coverage runs the gamut from nonpartisan beat and enterprise reporting to columns, podcasts, original video and links to must-read news from other sources. Before embarking on a story, our reporters ask: Will this have an audience outside of the state capital? Will this matter in 24 hours? Will the story add value to what's already been reported?

In everything we do, **The Texas Tribune newsroom strives to:**

- Own breaking and developing stories on state politics and policy that have repercussions beyond Austin
- Hold those in power accountable for their actions while amplifying the voices of the people they serve
- Write stories and produce projects that have a lasting impact and relevance to a broad audience of Texans
- Share our journalism and resources widely and freely with other state and national news organizations
- Connect and engage with our audience through the journalism we produce — online, through social media and at in-person events

Public policy and politics affect people — which is one reason that we view journalism as a service, not just a content suite. In the same way, growing our audience isn't about getting more clicks on a page, it's about helping communities come together to be invested in statewide issues through the journalism we produce.

We know there is an appetite for this information — our audience has grown precipitously, increasing in 2016 to more than 1 million average monthly site readers.

Whether it's through social media, email, in-person events or livestream, we continue to seek better ways of making our journalism accessible to readers statewide so that they can become more deeply engaged with important news and events, as well as with the greater community of Tribune readers and viewers.

OUR AUDIENCES

PAGEVIEWS

 **270 MILLION**

USERS

 **47 MILLION**

TWITTER FOLLOWERS

 **138,000**

FACEBOOK LIKES

 **86,500**

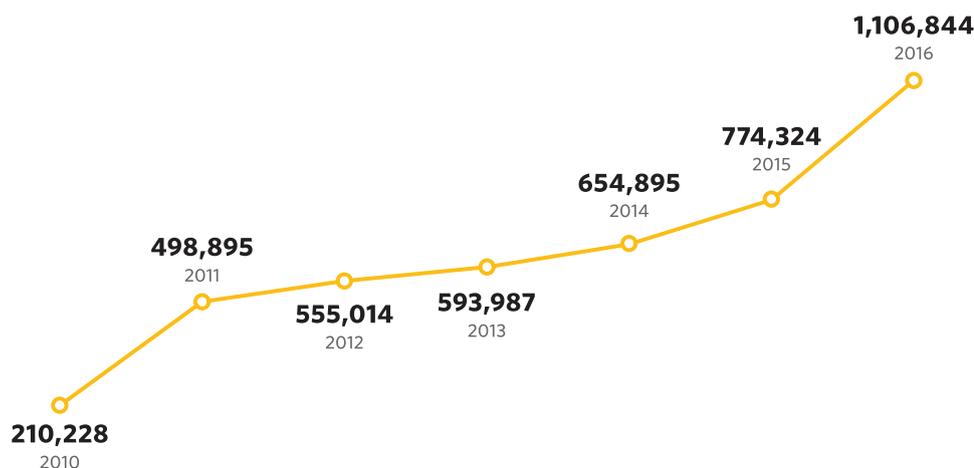
EVENTS

 **334**

EVENT ATTENDEES

 **67,000**

AVERAGE MONTHLY UNIQUE VISITORS SINCE LAUNCH



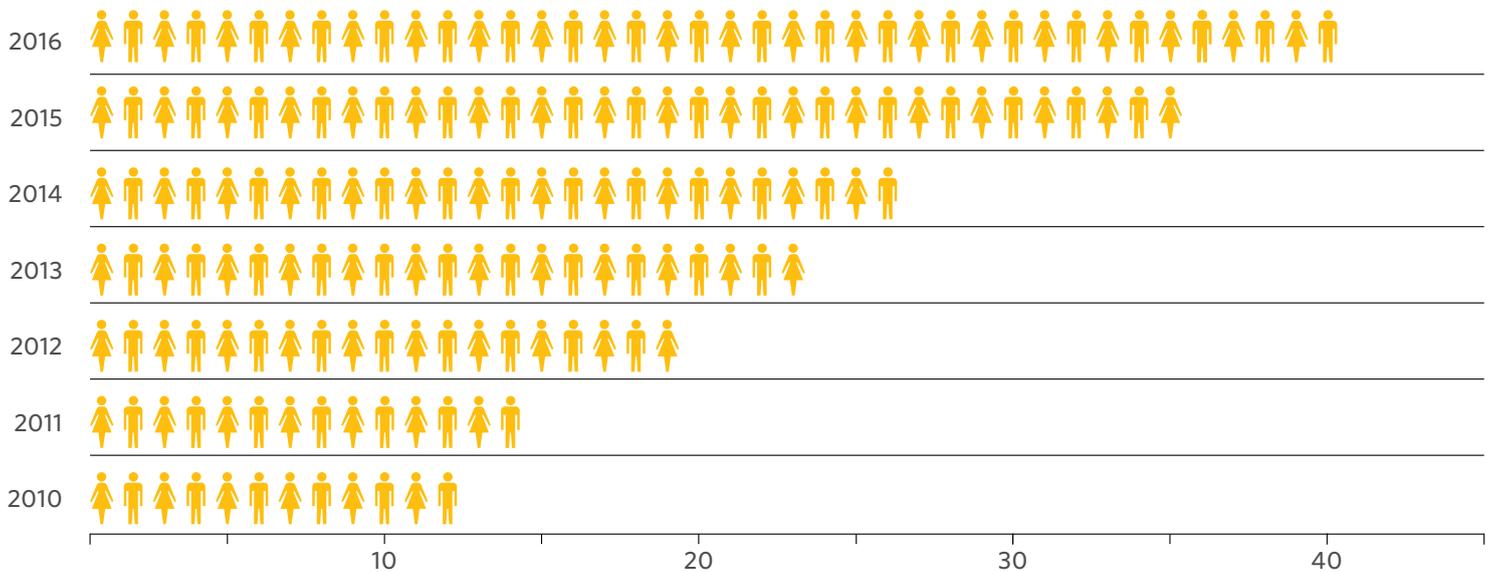
GLOBAL READERSHIP



A TRUSTED SOURCE

Tribune journalists work to inform millions of Texans about the challenges we face in **public and higher education, health and human services, race and immigration, criminal justice, energy, water and transportation**. They unearth facts that aren't being reported elsewhere, giving Texans the tools to be more thoughtful and engaged — at election time and at all times. The Tribune delivers exceptional storytelling that goes deep to provide context and clarity. And our journalists chase issues that matter to everyday Texans.

NUMBER OF TRIBUNE REPORTERS BY YEAR



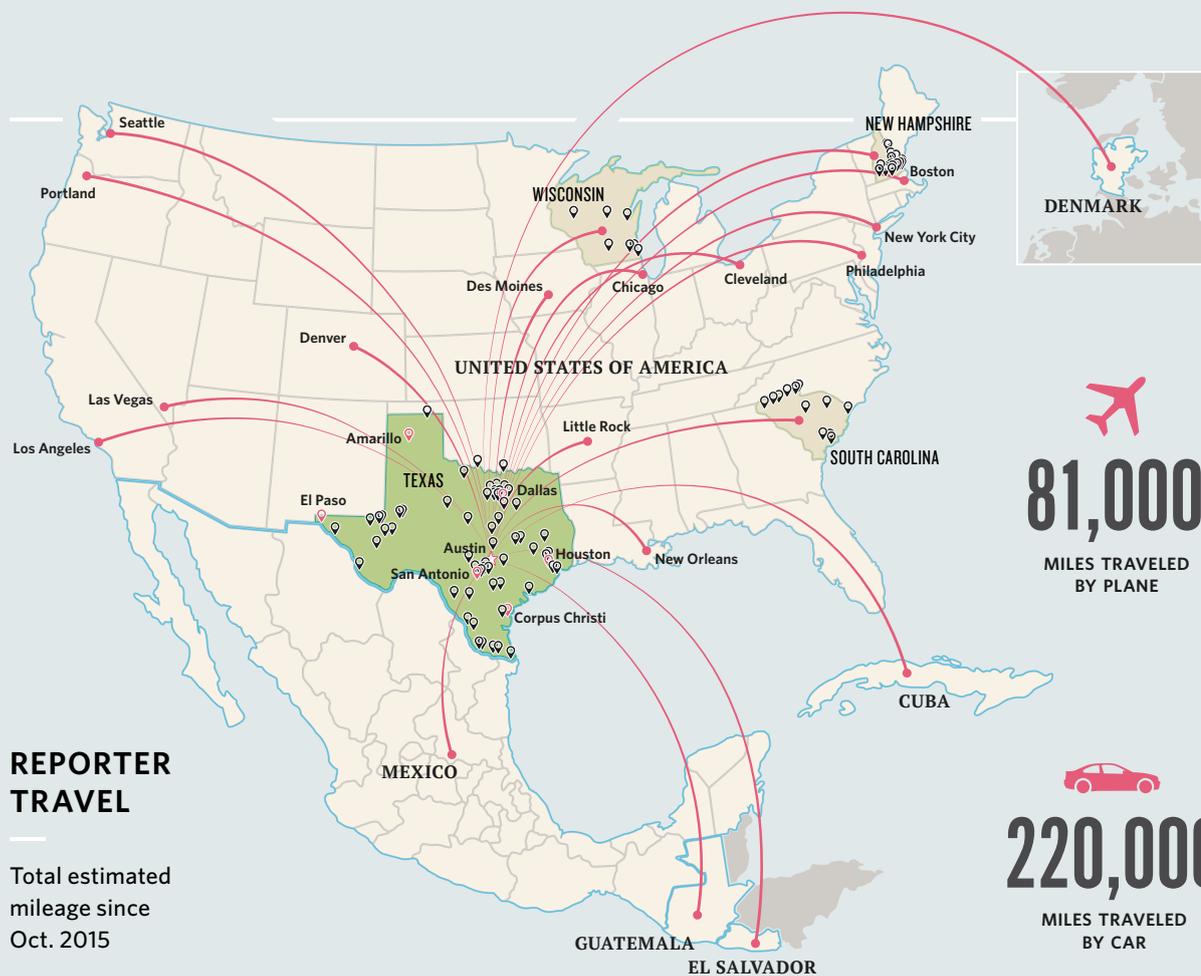
Our team of public-service journalists continues to grow: A 2014 Pew Research Center report highlighted that the Tribune had the largest statehouse bureau of any news organization in the country.



Corrie MacLaggan, the Tribune's managing editor, works into the night during the 2016 national elections.

By providing a steady stream of fact-based, thorough reporting, the Tribune has become a trusted source for news. Our content can be accessed beyond our site: We distribute it free of charge to 100-plus media partners (broadcast, print and digital) so that readers, listeners and viewers in big cities and small towns have equal access to information.

Media organizations are eager to use our stories because the Tribune is nonpartisan and reliable and our reporters and editors are experts on their beats. We have a partnership with The Washington Post to run our best reporting multiple times a week, and we partner with radio outlets, including NPR/KUT, on a broadcast called Texas Standard, and with the Center for Investigative Reporting on Reveal, a national investigative radio program that airs on more than 200 stations nationwide.



REPORTER TRAVEL

Total estimated mileage since Oct. 2015

TRIB+

Trib+ newsletters give our readers the opportunity to dig deeper on issues like water, public education and health care. These specialty newsletters feature interactive maps, data tools, research and articles from the Tribune and other trusted sources.

TribTalk

We take seriously the need to facilitate a statewide conversation about our priorities, and we understand that few things stimulate discussion more than provocative commentary. TribTalk is a digital forum for dialogue and debate about the day's news; it's an op-ed page for the 21st century that includes voices from all over the state and country.

THE BRIEF

The Brief is our popular weekday email digest. It's a morning tip sheet curated by Tribune journalists that arms readers with information about what's most important in Texas politics, policy and events for the day ahead.

Multimedia

Our multimedia team amplifies the work of Tribune reporters through audio, video, animations and visualizations that news outlets can easily access from our website. In the past year, multimedia reporters told human-interest stories on policy issues such as mental health and police-related shootings. Each week, Tribune editors and reporters also provide a journalist's take on the biggest news of the week through our informal and informative podcast, the TribCast.

Urban Affairs

In 2016, thanks to individual philanthropy and foundation support, we added an urban affairs reporter to our team. Working out of the newsroom of KERA, Dallas' public TV station, our urban affairs reporter analyzes, interprets and explains how statewide issues such as school choice, environmental protection, the plight of the uninsured, and the issues of infrastructure and transportation migrate down to the big-city level.

National Coverage

In 2014, we received a grant to expand our national footprint by hiring a D.C.-based reporter who works out of The Washington Post's newsroom. This crucial reporting has significantly increased the supply of quality information on the actions and decisions of the Texas congressional delegation — going beyond the noisy rhetoric to tell important policy stories from Capitol Hill. This coverage is holding Texas' elected officials accountable and is significantly increasing Texans' awareness of federal issues as they relate to the state. Whether the topic is public education, health care or immigration, policy changes made at the federal level have a magnified effect in Texas. Our Texas-based reporting staff collaborates with our Washington bureau to report on the impact of policy decisions back home in the state's congressional districts.

The Tribune's data team gathers unwieldy public information and puts it in user-friendly formats. These data visualizations provide context for our reporters' watchdog reporting, fact-based journalism and deep-dive investigations.

Working together, our enterprise reporters and data engineers make Freedom of Information Act requests to separate fact from fiction and overcome rhetoric for what's meaningful and clear.

In collaboration with the University of Texas at Austin, we also conduct statewide surveys online to query Texans about their viewpoints on issues and policies. During election years, our polls take the pulse of voters statewide; during legislative sessions, our polls give Texans the chance to give voice to the work that they'd like to see from their legislators.

Government Salaries Explorer

Because the public has a stake in knowing how tax dollars are spent, the Tribune publishes the salaries of government employees, including those working for state agencies, public universities, school districts and metropolitan transit authorities. We request salary records from public entities through the Texas Public Information Act and present them in searchable, sortable fashion.

Education Explorers

Our education news applications provide a wealth of data on the state's 1,219 school districts and 8,600+ public schools, charter schools and alternative campuses, as well as track higher education outcomes and achievement. Education officials, lawmakers, teachers and parents have a stake in this information, and we make it searchable and easy to find and share.

Legislative Coverage

The Texas Tribune's legislative microsite is a hallmark of our data and multimedia reporting to keep Texans up to date on the inner workings and outcomes of each legislative session. Our reporters track bills and curate watch lists by topic, and we provide easy access to lawmakers through our Elected Officials Directory, the daily House and Senate calendars and Capitol office maps. We also give folks front-row seats at House and Senate proceedings on critical issues through our livestream.



The Texas Tribune's data visuals team is made up of journalists and engineers who give more context, depth and clarity to the stories that Tribune reporters produce.

Ethics Explorer

This database helps educate citizens on the degree to which elected officials' personal financial interests may conflict with the public interest. The Explorer details everything from employment histories and stock holdings to campaign contributions and past and present ethics inquiries.

Using the latest technology to support our mission of educating and engaging with our audience, our data visuals team collaborates with reporters to create interactive tools that give everyday citizens easy access to public information.



AWARDS

Since our inception, The Texas Tribune's journalists have been honored to receive more than 50 awards for outstanding enterprise, investigative and data journalism.



Peabody Award

2017 Web: "Hell and High Water"
in collaboration with ProPublica



National Edward R. Murrow Awards

2016 Best Video New Series: "God and Governing"
2015 Best Use of Video and Best Website:
"The Shale Life"
2015 Best Video Investigative Reporting:
"Hurting for Work"



Regional Edward R. Murrow Awards

2016 Small Online News Organization Awards: General
Excellence and "God and Governing"
2015 Best Use of Video and Best Website: "The Shale Life"
2015 Best Video Investigative Reporting and Overall
Excellence: "Hurting for Work"



Online Journalism Awards

2016 Topical Reporting: "God and Governing" and
Explanatory Reporting: "The Price of Admission"
2016 General Excellence
2015 Topical Reporting: "Hurting for Work" and
Explanatory Reporting: "Undrinkable"



Society of Professional Journalists

2016 First Amendment Awards for Investigative
and Defending the Disadvantaged categories:
"Hurting for Work"
2015 Best Audio Slideshow: "Starstruck"

To view these projects, visit
texastribune.org/projects

EVENTS

We're sharing our passion for big public policy debates through events across the state — on college campuses, in community centers and everywhere in between — at which public officials, policy wonks and newsmakers answer for the work they're doing and how they're spending tax dollars. In the process, we're facilitating an important public conversation about our values, as Texans and Americans, and bringing people together to have tough conversations and — perhaps most importantly — listen to each other.



★ TEXAS TRIBUNE EVENTS

Free, town hall-style conversations and symposia are an essential part of our DNA. Our 50-plus events a year provide Texans with the rare opportunity to see, hear and directly question their elected officials, community leaders and policy makers. These conversations are not only held in the big cities around the state. We convene events in communities from Alpine to Tyler, Amarillo to Brownsville, to ensure that all Texans have an opportunity to interact with their elected officials and discuss major public policy issues that affect their lives.



The Tribune previews the 85th Legislature with an event at the Texas Union Ballroom featuring an interview with House Speaker Joe Straus. Photo by Bob Daemmrlich.

★ LIVESTREAMING

Leveraging cutting-edge technology to connect Texans with their elected representatives, we livestream every one of our events, drawing thousands of citizens into the conversation each year. This means it's no longer necessary to be in the room to learn more about politics and public policy; using desktop browsers and mobile devices, more Texans are joining our events.

But it's not just our events that we make available via livestream. We first started livestreaming the House and Senate floor proceedings in the 2011 legislative session so that Texans could watch and listen to their elected officials in real time. Today, we also use livestreaming to share breaking news, election night coverage, and political rallies and protests — in addition to providing even deeper-dive livestreaming of legislative proceedings.

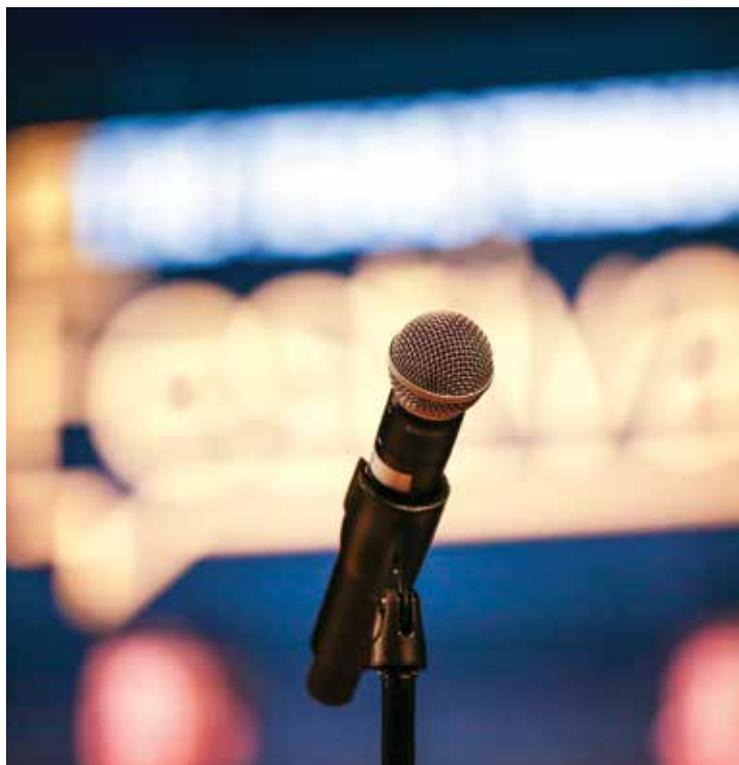


Our signature annual event, The Texas Tribune Festival, attracts thousands of attendees who wish to learn about Texas' biggest challenges and engage in thoughtful discussions about solutions. Thousands of decision-makers, industry leaders, community activists and citizens come to take part in shaping the public conversation. We also invite students to experience the Festival and get involved in the conversation. The meet-and-greets and interactive sessions we offer initiate them into a lifelong love of civic engagement and interest in public policy.



"My favorite part was being able to interact directly with leaders, politicians, journalists and other world-changing figures from across Texas and the nation. It is an event that cuts across political ideology, race, religion and affiliation to embrace collaboration, understanding and learning."

— TEXAS TRIBUNE FESTIVAL STUDENT ATTENDEE



Started in 2011, the annual Texas Tribune Festival — held at the University of Texas at Austin — draws thousands of Texans, including students, politicians, journalists, activists and thought leaders who come together to participate in panels on nearly a dozen content tracks and to engage in thoughtful conversations about statewide issues.

INVESTIGATIVE PROJECTS

As the Tribune has grown, so has our emphasis on investigative reporting and data-intensive projects. Our deep-dive enterprise reporting is designed to go beyond daily coverage to explain and demystify the long-term challenges we face.

Bordering on Insecurity

Our yearlong *Bordering on Insecurity* project employed traditional and multimedia reporting and coupled the talents of our most veteran journalists — working with Texas Tribune investigative fellows — to examine immigration and border issues along the Texas-Mexico border. The series separated rhetoric from reality and highlighted the complex policy challenges we face on an issue that touches on everything from economics and jobs to criminal justice. As immigration and border issues played a prominent role on the 2016 campaign trail, the reporting of our journalists gained national interest. The project featured more than 50 individual stories, mini documentaries and data tools, and it concluded with the production of a 30-minute PBS broadcast aired for public television audiences nationwide.

Unholstered

When Tribune reporters decided to tackle this massive open-records project, they took on the kind of painstaking reporting that underscores why putting public information into the hands of citizens has such value. Before *Unholstered*, there was no readily available, comprehensive database of police shootings in Texas. The Texas Tribune spent nearly a year collecting data from the state's 36 largest cities on every incident — not just the high-profile ones — in which police officers pulled the trigger between 2010 and 2015. The result of their work is a five-part series that looks at policy and administrative issues, mental health factors and raw numbers concerning this polarizing issue.

Hell and High Water and Boomtown, Flood Town

The Tribune — in collaboration with ProPublica and Reveal — produced the award-winning *Hell and High Water*, an immersive and interactive look at why Houston isn't ready for the next big hurricane, and how that could affect the nation as a whole. Less than a year after intense rain storms led to widespread flooding in Houston and across the state, the Bayou City found itself under water yet again. The Tribune and ProPublica explored these trends further with *Boomtown, Flood Town*.



Texas Tribune investigative reporter Morgan Smith interviews Lizette De Luna, an inmate at the Hilltop Unit prison for women. Photo by Gabriel Cristóver Pérez.

The Price of Admission

This award-winning series on university admission policies examined the impact of the state's Top 10 Percent Rule, digging deeper into the persistent controversy around a policy the state has utilized to make its universities more diverse. The individual stories and data tools used in the series show that there are no easy answers in the debate over race and higher education. Our project featured companion stories and broadcasts published in partnership with *Reveal*, a nationwide investigative radio show.

“Thank you for shedding light on the important issues that our educational system is currently facing. Your article has not only impacted me, but many individuals who have come across it.”

— READER RESPONSE TO THE PRICE OF ADMISSION

Sold Out

Our reporters spent months investigating the cases of young women caught up in Texas' domestic sex-trafficking trade. The series revealed that the most likely victims are those caught in the state's child welfare system and how decades of empty laws and programs have failed to protect these vulnerable youth.



“The Tribune is willing to give its reporters a significant amount of time, resources and guidance to go farther than just the day-one story to dig beneath the surface.”

— **NEENA SATIJA, INVESTIGATIVE REPORTER**

“The most rewarding part is knowing that our work makes a difference. We know that we have the attention of state legislators and our representatives in Washington. Our content regularly shows up in news outlets across the state. For many Texans, we are the go-to source for breaking news and in-depth reports. It’s an honor to know that so many people have that kind of trust in us.”

— **AYAN MITTRA, EDITOR**

“Coverage of the Texas-Mexico border can get lost in the shuffle because some of the regions are so far away from Austin. But the Tribune offers a chance to report on policy issues at play in Austin, specifically on border security and immigration, that affect areas hundreds of miles away from the capital city.”

— **JULIÁN AGUILAR, REPORTER**



Martin do Nascimento

ENGAGING AND INVESTING

It's been our mission since day one to inform Texans — and engage with them — about public policy, politics and statewide issues. As we continue to develop our coverage and grow our audience, we recognize the importance of trying new ways of delivering news to our readers and connecting with them on a host of issues. We're making it a priority to ensure that the concerns of more Texans inform our coverage. In 2016, generous readers helped crowdfund our first-ever **community reporter**. With this new reporting position, we're going the extra mile, literally, to hear from citizens all over the state about what issues are of concern to them.

Whether we're traveling the state or using the connectivity of social media, we're striving to engage with Texans using our accountability journalism to demonstrate how what happens in the Capitol affects the lives of everyday Texans.



"In the course of one summer, I learned how to hound government officials for data, how to think outside the box on ways to obtain that data, how to keep at a story even when it gets hard, how to delve into policy-heavy reports and analyze budgets. But most importantly, I learned about the type of reporting that excites me."

— **ANERI PATTANI, FORMER TRIBUNE FELLOW**



TEXAS TRIBUNE FELLOWS

In more than seven years in operation, we've had more than 100 fine young journalists participate in the Tribune's Fellows Program, and the reputation and competition for acceptance into it has continued to increase with each semester because of the invaluable newsroom training and opportunities Tribune fellowships provide.

Our internships provide university students the chance to work side by side with veterans in our newsroom: They get the opportunity to experience real mentorship, learn investigative techniques and amass a body of work that they can take out into the world.

This program is integral to the future of journalism, making it possible for emerging talent to hone their craft and learn how to do the right kind of public-interest reporting in the right way.

At The Texas Tribune, innovation is happening each day, with every single hand on deck playing a key role. Whether it's through our audience engagement, or the work we do to train future generations in serious reporting, or the way our reporters and editors share best practices and tricks of the trade with other news organizations — we're working to share our mission for public-service journalism and civic engagement in any way we can.

"I feel well **informed** each morning from reading The Texas Tribune and am ready for the day's unfolding events."

"The Tribune covers the forgotten and wonky stories others won't touch. This is a **huge contribution**."

"While most papers are paring back their Capitol reporting and others rely on 140-character news stories, the Tribune consistently analyzes and reports on all the stories with **timeliness** and **depth**."

"I think the Tribune reports in a manner that holds elected officials **accountable** for their positions. There is nowhere to hide with the Tribune analyzing the system."

"If I want to know anything about **Texas news** I always check the Tribune."

"Tribune events really set the publication apart. It's not enough to just talk about being politically engaged, and the Tribune provides regular, wonderful opportunities for **active engagement**."

"**Unbiased**, no-shouting coverage."

"The Tribune has done more than any other publication to engage the public in Texas politics and news by making it very **accessible**."

"I like the databases and interactive material best. It gives a **deeper level of analysis** than you get on other news media and allows you to really become informed without feeling overwhelmed."

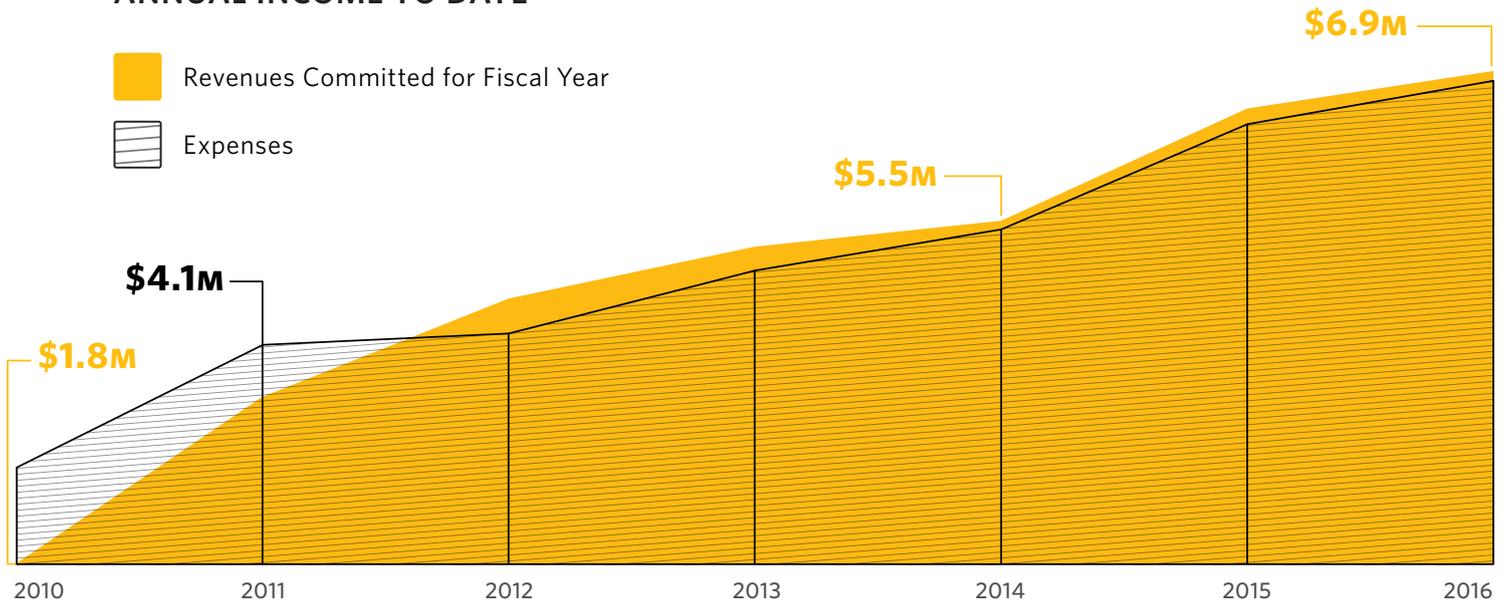
"I appreciate the splendid coverage of state events and the prompt and accurate publishing of news via email. You are my **best source** of Texas news."

"Because of you, I have contacted the Texas legislative branches to participate in homeowners association laws. You have enabled me to find out facts **BEFORE** the laws are argued and/or passed. **I now vote on every matter in every election.**"

SUSTAINABILITY

As a nonprofit newsroom, we rely on the generosity of individuals, foundations and corporations to fund our great reporting, with the ultimate goal of putting public-service journalism in front of as many people as possible. A mix of individual giving, corporate sponsorship and earned revenue makes our important work possible — and sustainable over time.

ANNUAL INCOME TO DATE



As a citizen-supported media organization, we're proud that we've been able to do exactly what we set out to do! We've used technology to deliver a new kind of journalism: nonpartisan news that can reach more people and make it easy for them to turn knowledge into action. Thanks to the Tribune, citizen involvement in Texas is on the rise — and we're changing the way business gets done in our state.

WHAT'S NEXT?

The same dynamic energy it took to start the Tribune in 2009 is carrying us into our eighth year. We continue to think entrepreneurially about how to best serve all of Texas with serious journalism on public policy and politics so that everyday citizens — not just insiders — can engage with what's happening in the Capitol and how it affects their lives.

Thanks to support from around the state and across the nation, we are holding to a strong commitment to excellence, fostering meaningful audience growth and engagement, and providing our friends and neighbors with free and easy access to fact-based, nonpartisan news, data and events. Pursuing the kind of watchdog journalism that puts information in the hands of citizens and keeps our state healthy and engaged is made possible by the generosity of many individuals, foundations and sponsors. What comes next is more of this, thanks to you.

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