



**THE
TEXAS
TRIBUNE**



We launched The Texas Tribune in 2009 to give citizens a better understanding of the inner workings of state government — a window on a world where laws are passed, tax dollars are spent and political and policy fights establish the framework for the public’s business. We do this by providing all Texans with more reliable access to nonpartisan news, databases of useful information and a suite of editorial events at which elected and appointed officials are held accountable to the constituents they serve.



From our very first day in operation, we’ve believed that educating our friends and neighbors about the issues that affect every one of us will make them more productive in their daily lives.

INFORMING AND ENGAGING TEXANS

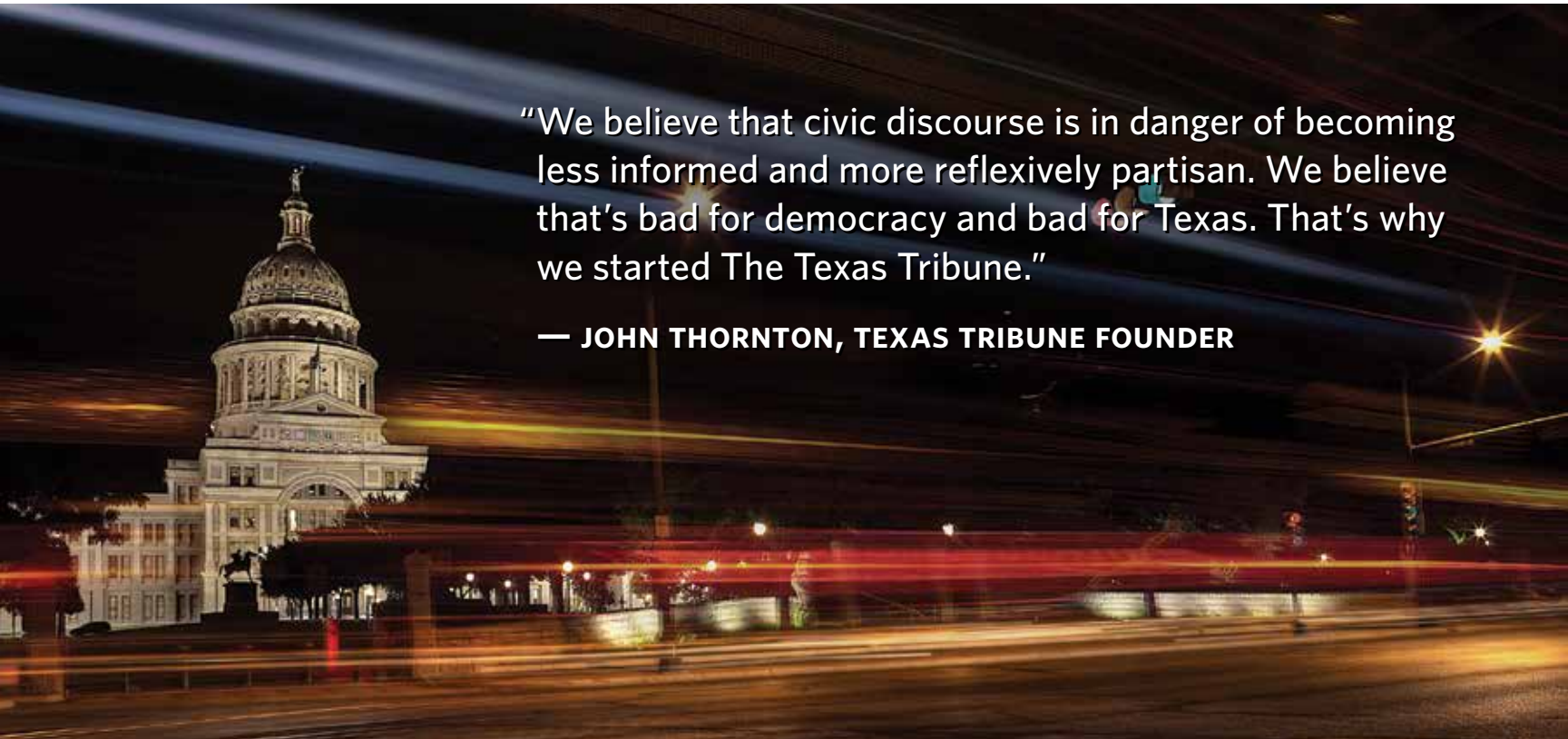


...is still what we’re about. It will be always be our mission.



We’re into year seven of delivering on that promise, thanks to a lot of innovative thinking, risk taking and hard work — all enabled by your generous support. Together, we’ll make Texas a smarter and better state.

— EVAN SMITH, CEO & EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



“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

**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 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.

On Nov. 3, 2009, The Texas Tribune and its destination website were launched, thanks to \$4 million in private contributions as seed funding, a small band of talented computer programmers and some of the most accomplished journalists in the state. Since launch, The Texas Tribune has produced robust nonpartisan journalism, interactive tools to access public data and public events around the state, bringing greater transparency and accountability to public policy, politics and government. We are working 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 start-up with the potential to change the face of politics and policy reporting in Texas.”

— EMILY RAMSHAW, EDITOR

“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 & EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

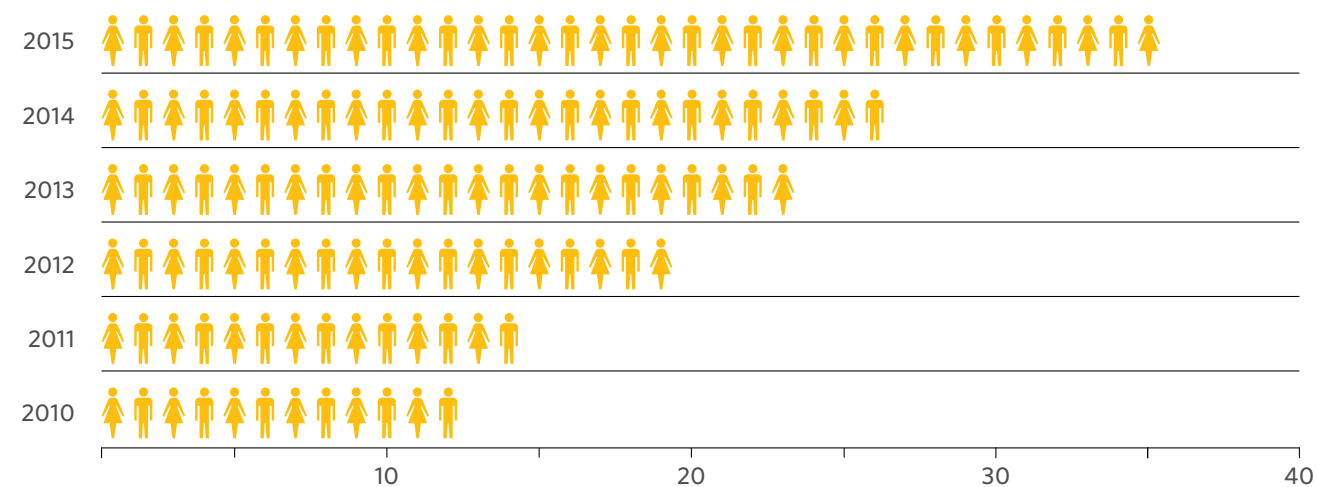
INNOVATIVE. ENTERPRISING. ENGAGING.

Every day, all day, a conversation is going on in Texas, and it impacts us all. Whether you hail from a big city or a small town, whether that town has a newspaper or not, whether that newspaper has Capitol coverage or not, this stuff matters. Roads matter. Public education matters. Higher education matters. Energy matters. Demographic change matters. These and other big issues are being talked about, chewed over, inspected and dissected by the opinion leaders and shapers, and we at The Texas Tribune are watching. 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 mean to educate as many Texans as we can about the work of elected officials, about state government and the impact it has on them.

As a nonpartisan, digital-first news organization, we publish beat and enterprise reporting, databases and data visualizations, columns, podcasts, event videos, and links to must-read news from other sources — all on our destination website.

While the staffs of traditional newspapers have been shrinking, our team of public-service journalists has been growing. A 2014 Pew Research Center report highlighted the Tribune's statehouse bureau as the largest of any news organization in the country.

Number of Tribune Reporters by Year



A TRUSTED SOURCE

By providing a steady stream of nonpartisan reporting, the Tribune has become a trusted source for news. Our content is distributed free of charge to 100-plus media partners so that residents of the state's big cities and small towns have equal access to journalism in the public interest.

Our broadcast, print and digital partners are eager to work with us because they know the Tribune's coverage is fair, thorough and accurate and because our reporters are experts on their beats. Three collaborations we're especially proud of: our content partnership with *The Washington Post*, which regularly runs our stories in print and online; our weekly spots on the statewide public radio program Texas Standard, which is produced by KUT-FM, Austin's NPR station; and our contributions to Reveal, a weekly radio program featuring investigative journalism and innovative storytelling that airs on more than 200 stations nationwide.

Tribune journalists work to inform millions of Texans about the challenges we face in **public and higher education, health care, immigration, criminal justice, energy, water and transportation.**

They provide context and clarity. They unearth facts that aren't being reported elsewhere. They tell stories that would otherwise go untold. They give Texans the tools to be more thoughtful citizens — and the motivation to participate civically, at election time and at all times.

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.

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 at any time. We produce audio and video clips upon request, partner with other news organizations to produce original multimedia stories and make our reporters and editors available for interviews.

National Coverage

A grant in 2014 allowed us to expand our national footprint by hiring a D.C.-based reporter who works out of *The Washington Post's* newsroom, increasing the supply of reliable information about the activities of Texas' congressional delegation and deepening our coverage of issues of interest to the state at the U.S. Capitol and all across the executive branch.

With Texas' voter turnout among the lowest in the nation, our focus on the 2016 election cycle could not be more central to our mission. Which is why we track candidates, campaigns and the conversation on and off the trail.



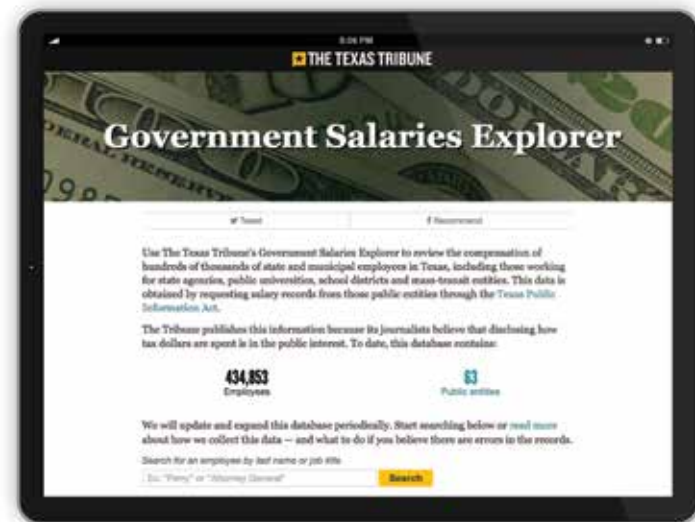
God and Governing, an immersive video project on the increasingly visible role of religion in the legislative process in Texas, included five mini-documentaries and interviews with dozens of state lawmakers. A half-hour special called "God and Governing" aired on PBS stations around the state.

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



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 a searchable, sortable fashion.



Public Schools Explorer

Updated in 2015, our Public Schools Explorer provides a wealth of data on the state's 1,219 school districts and 8,646 public schools, charter schools and alternative campuses. Information on student demographics, test scores, graduation rates, college readiness, teacher salaries and more is included for each school and district.

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.

Election Scoreboard

Our Election Scoreboard tallies election results in real time on primary, runoff and general election nights, and tracks the outcomes of every single statewide, legislative and congressional race.

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.

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 opportunity to see, hear and directly question their elected officials, community leaders and policymakers.

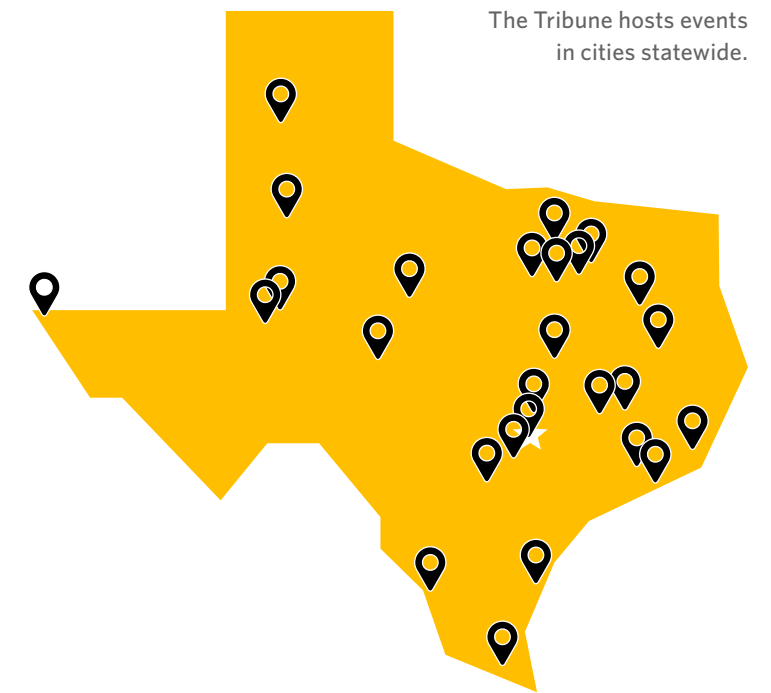
THE TEXAS TRIBUNE Festival

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 interested citizens come to take part in shaping the public conversation.

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 widely and freely available. We 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, and it was so popular that we did it again in 2013 and 2015. Today, we use livestreaming to share breaking news, election night coverage, political rallies and the like.



The annual Texas Tribune Festival features hundreds of speakers, such as Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, right.

INVESTIGATIVE PROJECTS

As the Tribune has grown, so has its 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.

Hurting for Work

This award-winning series exposed gaping holes in the state's workers' compensation system, resulting in immediate changes to Texas' worker safety hotline.

The Shale Life

Using an array of photographic images, data and multimedia reporting, this 15-part visual series explored how oil and gas activity has changed the face of small-town Texas — in good ways and bad.

Undrinkable

This award-winning multimedia project explored how nearly 90,000 people along the Texas-Mexico border have no access to running water and how an untold number more — likely tens of thousands — have water of alarmingly poor quality.

Paid to Prosecute

This six-month investigation — a collaboration with the *Austin American-Statesman* — uncovered a troubling arrangement in workers' compensation cases that allowed a single, privately held insurer to have direct access to Travis County prosecutors to pursue suspected fraud cases on the company's behalf.

Road From Rita

The Texas Tribune and the *Beaumont Enterprise* partnered for a project that looked at the 2005 evacuation of Southeast Texas ahead of Hurricane Rita and whether a similar catastrophe can be avoided when the next big storm hits.

AWARDS

Since our inception, we've received 49 awards for our enterprise journalism and data reporting. Among those awarded in 2015 are:



Online Journalism Awards

Topical Reporting: "Hurting for Work"
Explanatory Reporting: "Undrinkable"



National Edward R. Murrow Awards

Best Use of Video and Best Website: "The Shale Life"
Best Video Investigative Reporting: "Hurting for Work"



Regional Edward R. Murrow Awards

Best Use of Video and Best Website: "The Shale Life"
Best Video Investigative Reporting and Overall Excellence: "Hurting for Work"



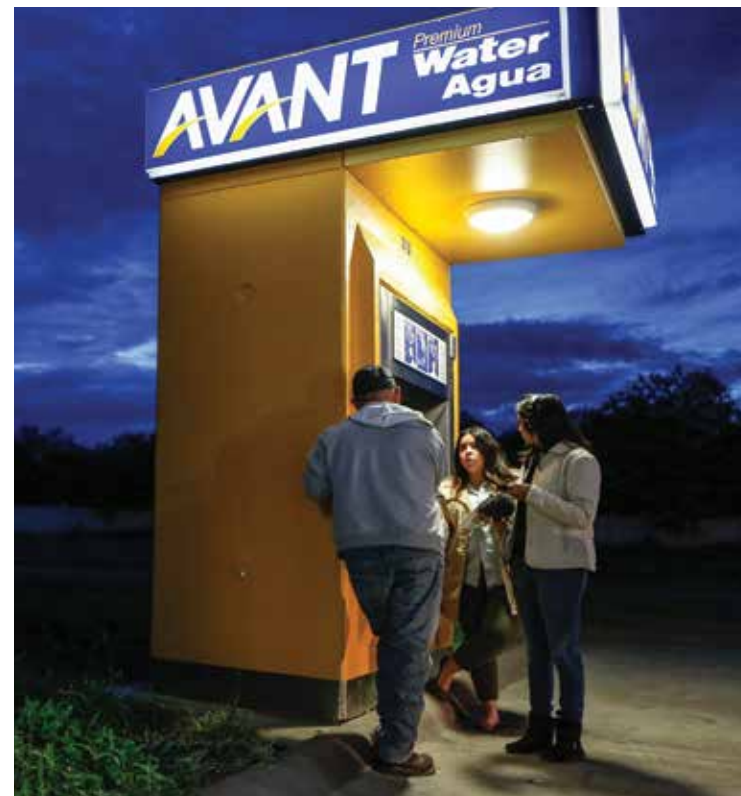
Society of Professional Journalists

First Amendment Awards for Investigative and Defending the Disadvantaged categories: "Hurting for Work"



Texas Medical Association Anson Jones Award

Online/Mixed Media category: First Place, "Hurting for Work"



Reporters Alexa Ura and Neena Satija interview a resident of Starr County for the Tribune's "Undrinkable" project.

"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."

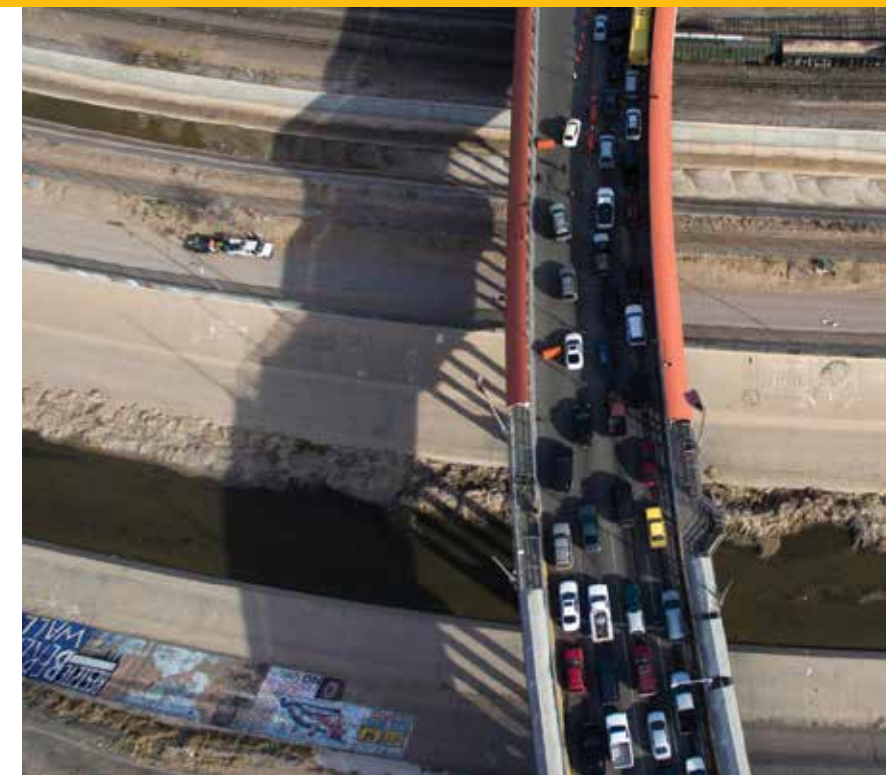
— **AYAN MITTRA, MANAGING EDITOR**

"At legacy news organizations, the default answer to just about every new idea is 'no,' followed by the reasons why you cannot do something. At the Tribune, the default is 'yes' or 'Why don't we try X?' For a veteran like myself, it's a huge breath of fresh air. Also, how incredibly nimble the organization is; the lack of news bureaucracy here means more time spent on creating great journalism."

— **TERRI LANGFORD, REPORTER**

"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."

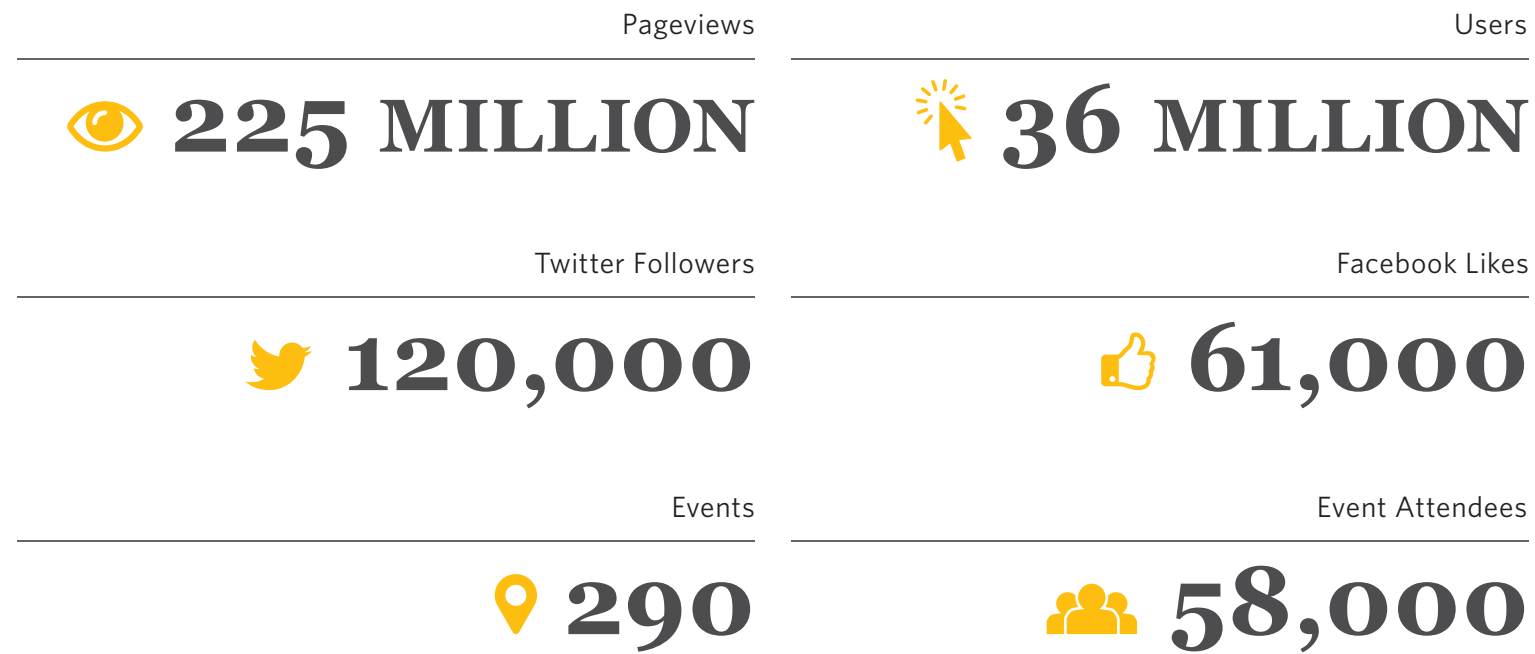
— **JULIÁN AGUILAR, REPORTER**



BUILDING AN ENGAGED & INFORMED COMMUNITY

Community buy-in was always an essential element of the plan we hatched for a citizen-supported digital media organization, and it remains crucial to our success today. We've used technology to deliver a new kind of journalism: nonpartisan news that can reach more people and make it easier for them to participate. If folks all over the state are engaged by and with our news reporting, data journalism and suite of editorial events, then we're living up to our mission. And the theory of the case has been proven: People really do care about this stuff.

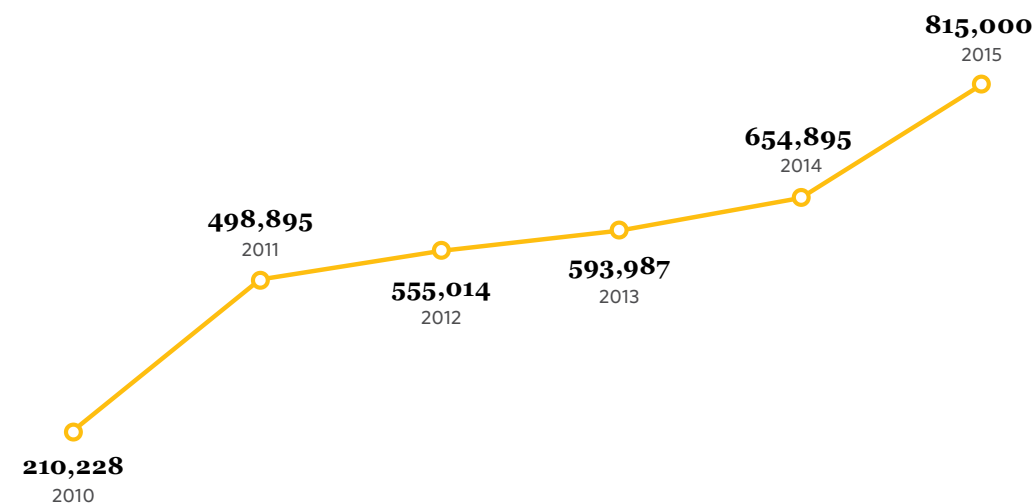
Since Launch



Global Readership



Average Monthly Unique Visitors to Date



READER COMMENTS

"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."

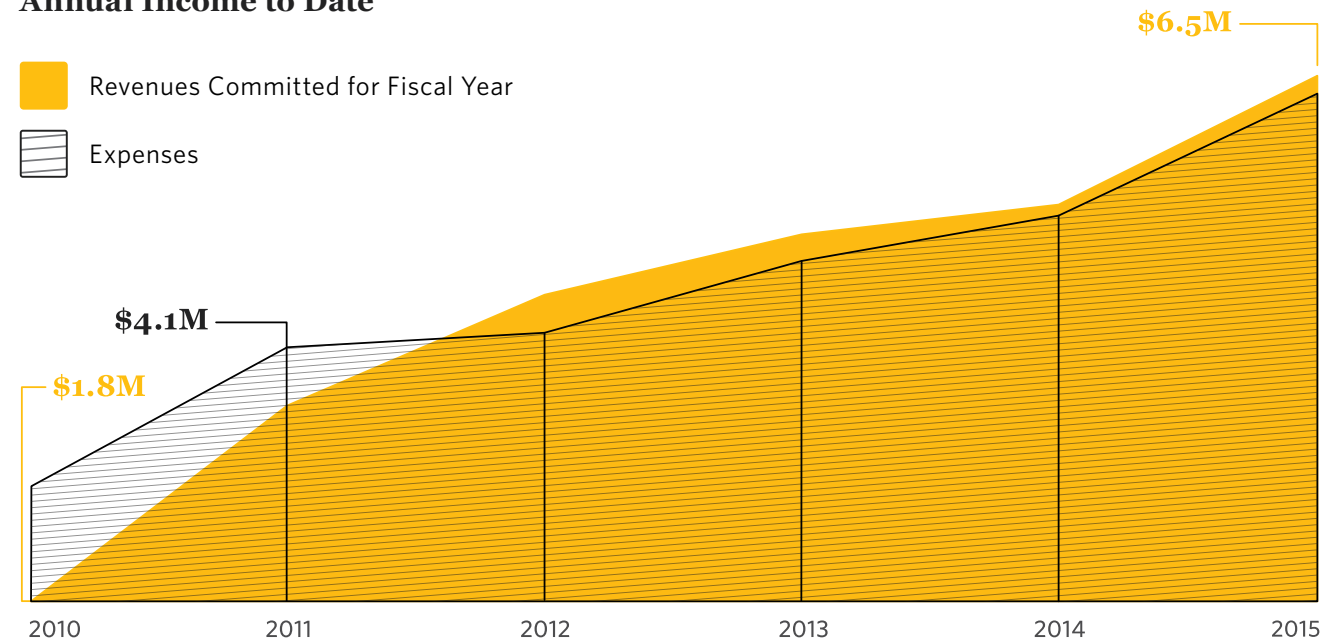
"I appreciate the splendid coverage of state events and the prompt and accurate publishing of news via email. You are my **best source** of Texas news."

"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 more than six years ago! 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 government.

To make a donation or view a complete list of our donors, please visit texastribune.org/support-us.

What's next?

More! More readers, more places, more impact. Our goal is to reach even more Texans — in all corners of the state — allowing them to be better informed and engaged. We plan to access more people, providing relevant coverage and live events throughout Texas. Fueled by technology, we will continue to innovate in news and its delivery.

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