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# San Diego Public Library Adds Program to Increase News Literacy

**‘BREAKING NEWS @ THE LIBRARY’ PROGRAM SERIES FOCUSES ON CITIZEN JOURNALISM, SOURCING DATA, UNDERSTANDING BIAS**

SAN DIEGO – Earlier this month, the American Dialect Society selected “fake news” as the 2017 Word of the Year due to the dramatic increase of this term, which is now commonly used by government officials, the general public and cited in news reports. The term has taken on a wide-range of definitions and narrowing down the meaning has proven to be contentious.

To help patrons understand journalism in the era of “fake news,” the San Diego Public Library is beginning a series of free news literacy programs for patrons to understand the process of media reporting. The Breaking News @ the Library program will be led by library staff, professional San Diego reporters, editors and academics who will provide instruction and recommendations on becoming a citizen journalist, identifying trustworthy information sources and how to identify bias. All programs are free to attend, but registration is required. *(Insert link to webpage for Breaking News @ The Library that will have registration links to all. Page is not yet live.)*

**“Libraries are in the business of not just providing sources of information but helping patrons discern the best sources available,” said Misty Jones, Director, San Diego Public Library. “‘Breaking News @ the Library’ will offer participants a chance to learn about the news cycle, what goes into reporting and how they can make sure they are more discerning of their information sources.”**

The first program in the series, “Citizen Journalism” will teach the basics of the news business by journalists who work at newspapers, radio and television stations in San Diego. Presented by the San Diego Press Club, San Diego Society of Professional Journalists, and the San Diego Union-Tribune, the one-hour program will review the daily process of reporting, the difference between real news and “fake news” and how to be a responsible citizen reporter. The “Citizen Journalism” is presented by the San Diego Press Club, San Diego Society of Professional Journalists, and the San Diego Union-Tribune and will be held at the Central Library on Wednesday, Jan. 31, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. in the Shiley Special Events Suite on the ninth floor. The Central Library offers two hours of free parking with validation.

In February, the Breaking News @ the Library program will offer “Literacy and You,” led by two librarians who will train participants on how to read the news with a critical eye. The 1-hour program will highlight cognitive bias, the importance of using multiple sources in a report and the need for verification and accountability in news reports. This program will be held at the Scripps Miramar Ranch Library on Tuesday, Feb. 20 at 6 p.m.

The “Minorities in the Media” program will discuss how minorities are portrayed in media coverage and the decline of minority reporters in newsrooms. This program will feature a moderated panel discussion with working print, online and broadcast news reporters from the National Association of Black Journalists and the Asian American Journalist Association. This program will be held at the Central Library on Wednesday, Feb. 28, 2018 at 7 p.m.

In March, as part of Women’s History Month and in partnership with San Diego State University’s School of Journalism, Breaking News @ the Library will offer a “Women and Media” program featuring a panel of female reporters, editors and professors. The conversation will address women working as journalists, media coverage of women’s issues and how women are portrayed in news reports. This program will be held at the La Jolla/Riford Library on Tuesday, March 20, 2018 at 7 p.m.

The San Diego Public Library’s Breaking News @ The Library program series is funded by a training grant awarded by the American Library Association (ALA). The ALA operates the Media Literacy @ Your Library project in collaboration with the Center for News Literacy @ Stony Brook University and is supported by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the Democracy Fund, and the Rita Allen Foundation.

### **About the San Diego Public Library**

With a vision of being the place for opportunity, discovery and inspiration, the San Diego Public Library is a hub for knowledge and lifelong learning. As the largest library system in the region, it serves a population of more than 1.3 million people. Learn about events at the San Diego Central Library @ Joan A Irwin Jacobs Common and 35 community branch libraries, find links to programs and resources or search for materials in the online catalog at [www.sandiegolibrary.org](http://www.sandiegolibrary.org).

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