

# **IRE Academic Task Force Report**

**April 18, 2025**

## **Pilot Student Chapters:**

As of April 2025, IRE has six pilot student chapters underway, and an additional three with plans to launch during the Fall 2025 semester.

- The CUNY chapter has hosted four events with a fifth planned in May. It has elected chapter leaders, sent several students to the NICAR conference and the school is assisting with paying for student memberships for those who can't afford to join and sending a few students to the June conference. Board member Andy Lehren has been instrumental in this chapter's early success. **(photos below)**
- The University of Missouri chapter has also held several events and is working to navigate bureaucratic red tape in the creation of an official campus group designation. This will help inform the guidance we draft at the end of the pilot period to offer to future chapters. Task force member Mark Horvit helped launch the effort and David Herzog will be taking over as chapter advisor once the chapter is formalized.
- Arizona State University held its first event this week – with excellent engagement and student led initiatives in booking and promoting the event. Task force member Mark Greenblatt has spearheaded the effort. **(photos below)**
- Boston University (task force member Maggie Mulvihill) and Northwestern University (Tom O'Connor) each have events planned for next week. **(flyers below)**
- University of Maryland has elected an executive committee and is planning to have a meeting and event before the end of the Spring semester in May. Task force member Emily Condon is leading the effort. She made sure the executive committee is comprised of juniors and sophomores to provide consistency as they progress into the next school year.

Three additional schools, University of Southern California, University of Florida, and Indiana University are planning to launch student chapters this Fall. All three were initially included as pilot schools but notified the task force that they would be unable to establish logistics quickly enough to proceed this semester.

We have received requests from University of Arizona, University of Nebraska, and University of Texas to launch chapters as well and plan to include them in the next round of approvals.

### **Recognition and Awards:**

Our partnership with the [University of Vermont's Center for Community News](#) is still in development to co-brand their existing newsletter which publishes periodically to circulate student work from universities around the country. We are developing a workflow to include highlighting our student members' investigative work.

Subcommittee Chair Andy Lehren met with Diana Fuentes and Amy Eaton (staff liaison) to identify technical needs such as adjusting our Constant Contacts account so IRE members can opt-in to receive the newsletter, adding that capability and link to our IRE website, and creating an email address for members to submit their work to be highlighted.

Once those steps are completed, UVT seems eager to get everything going and plans to begin with our IRE Award winners from the student categories.

### **Conferences/Professional Development:**

Student members accounted for approximately 1/3 of the attendees at the NICAR conference in Minneapolis in March. More than 100 attendees participated in a networking session for students where we spoke about the pilot student chapter initiative and the newsletter effort to elevate student work.

We also organized a student-focused data panel on upcoming changes to student fees being impacted by NIL money and the House settlement, followed by a networking session for students and professional members to interact. This session was sponsored (with snacks and beverages) by Syracuse University (task force member Jodi Upton), Boston University (Maggie Mulvihill) and University of Missouri (Mark Horvit).

Key takeaways from the session included the need for job recruiters to be present at future NICAR conferences, given the increase in student attendance. And rather than a specific networking session for students seeking jobs, we recommended to staff to create a "job search" networking session which could serve all members, given the current climate of the industry.

We are working with staff to organize a networking session for the June conference as well - marketed toward job seekers, recruiters and members with open jobs in their newsroom.

## **Instructional Resources:**

The subcommittee, chaired by Dana Chinn (USC), drafted ideas for revival of an instructional resources section on the IRE website. We met with task force liaison Amy Eaton to review the needs, which she plans to discuss with Cody Winchester/Director of Technology and Online Resources and other IRE staff.

These resources would serve an estimated 600 educator members who teach either full or part time. The goal would be to enhance the [IRE on Campus](#) section to include sample syllabi, assignments, connections to educator networks and other instructional resources.

The subcommittee also noted the need for Course Packs to be updated, regularly maintained, and better marketed so members know what's available and where to find them.

The subcommittee also reiterated the need for IRE's resources (tip sheets, award entries, and academic materials) to be easily searchable, which is already a key staff initiative.

The subcommittee will work to develop materials to launch the section but recommends there be a standing academic committee to oversee ongoing development and maintenance of such resources to minimize the impact on staff.

## **Pilot Student Chapter Photos**

### **ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY**









# JOIN US FOR THE **FIRST MEETING** OF **IRE** AT **ASU**

Thursday, April 17 | 5 p.m.  
Cronkite 444

Learn from  
**Pulitzer**  
**Prize-winning**  
investigative  
journalist  
**Brian Rosenthal**  
and bring  
questions!





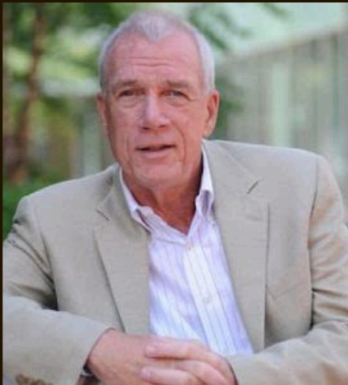
# **BOSTON UNIVERSITY**

## **IN CONVERSATION WITH SPOTLIGHT**

**A panel with Boston Globe investigative reporters**

Kickoff event hosted by Boston University's  
Investigative Reporters and Editors Student Chapter

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**Walter Robinson**

Led the Globe Spotlight team to a 2003 Pulitzer Prize for uncovering rampant sexual abuse by priests in Boston's Catholic archdiocese. This investigation was featured in the 2015 film "Spotlight," which won Best Picture at the Academy Awards.



**Patricia Wen**

Spotlight editor for seven years until early 2024, winning numerous national awards for her investigative work. She was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize three times — in 2004 and 2013, then in 2018 as the Spotlight editor overseeing a seven-part series on race issues in Boston.

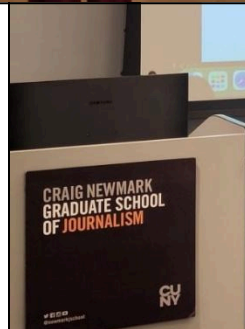
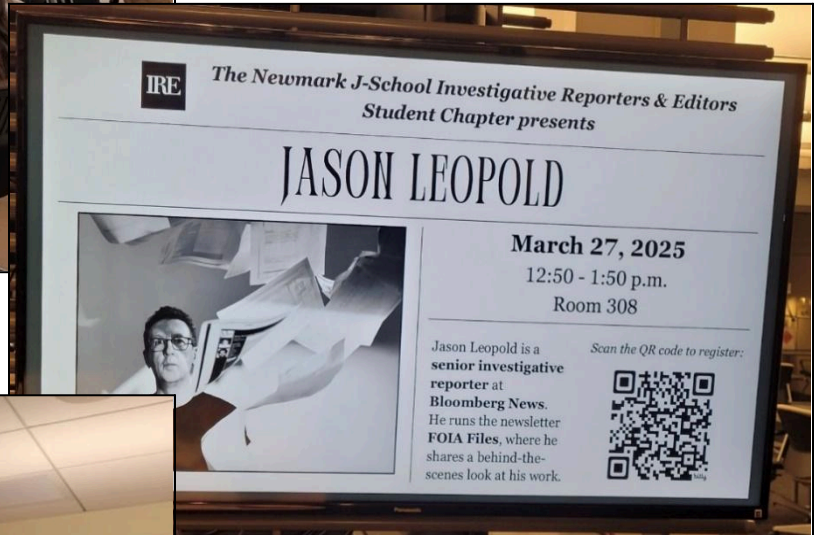


**Stephen Kurkjian**

Three-time Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative journalist and founding member of the Globe Spotlight team. He is a professor, attorney and the author of "Master Thieves: The Boston Gangsters Who Pulled Off the World's Greatest Art Heist."

**Wednesday, April 23, 2025**  
**5:30 – 7:00 pm || COM Room 209**

# CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK





**NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY**



**MEDILL**  
SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM

# **ALEJANDRA CANCINO**

**INVESTIGATIVE REPORTER  
AND IRE BOARD MEMBER**

**APRIL 21**  
**12:00 – 1:00 PM**

**ROOM 1632**  
**303 E WACKER DR,**  
**CHICAGO**



**REGISTER  
ABOVE**

# **FREE PIZZA!**

# NICAR STUDENT NETWORKING EVENT

