

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.



CONSTITUTION: FREE SPEECH, COMMUNITY AND WHAT JOURNALISM IS MADE OF
2026 ALASKA PRESS CLUB CONFERENCE • APRIL 16-18 • ANCHORAGE, AK
UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA ANCHORAGE & ALASKA PUBLIC MEDIA

#akpressclub

QUICK LOOK

Alaska Press Club 2026

APRIL 16	8:15 a.m.	4 p.m.	7 p.m.
	Radio Day Begins Alaska Public Media	Radio Network Meeting Alaska Public Media	Katie Orlinsky UAA Wendy Williamson Auditorium
APRIL 17	8:45 a.m.	4:30 p.m.	6:30 p.m.
	All Media Day Begins UAA Rasmuson Hall	Merch Swap & Sale UAA Rasmuson Hall	Press Party Akela Space
APRIL 18	8:45 a.m.	1:15 p.m.	7 p.m.
	All Media Sessions UAA Rasmuson Hall	Conference Keynote UAA Rasmuson Hall	Awards Celebration 49th State Brewing Doors open at 6:30 p.m.

- Thank You to Our Partners -

Atwood Foundation through the Alaska Center for Excellence in Journalism Fund

Alaska Public Media | A-Mark Foundation

University of Alaska Anchorage Department of Journalism and Public Communications

UAA College of Arts & Sciences | Alaska Airlines

UAF's Snedden Chair in the Department of Science and Environmental Journalism

The Stoop | Alaska Photographic Center

Alaska Teen Media Institute | Akela Space | Moose's Tooth

Alaska Korean News | Anchorage Korean News

Thursday, Radio Day | Alaska Public Media

8:15 - 8:45 a.m.	Doors Open Register for the conference, get some breakfast and hot drinks and warm up for the training. TV Studio
8:45 - 9 a.m.	Welcome Remarks Alaska Public Media's CEO Ed Ulman welcomes guests back to Radio Day. Then Chief Editor and Senior Vice President of Journalism Lori Townsend lays out the day's agenda. TV Studio
9 - 10:15 a.m.	How to be Yourself on Radio (And Help Others be Themselves Too) B.A. Parker B.A. Parker from NPR's Code Switch talks about how to navigate the daunting task of being comfortable on mic as a reporter and storyteller, but also encouraging those who aren't familiar with being interviewed and getting them prepared for radio. TV Studio
10:30 - 11:45 a.m.	Navigating the Power and Pitfalls of AI Use Annie Feidt and Eric Stone Artificial intelligence systems are more capable than ever before — but they come with risks. Over the past six months, Alaska Public Media's AI committee has been working on a set of principles to guide ethical AI use in the newsroom and across the organization. Presenters Annie Feidt and Eric Stone will share the what and the why of Alaska Public Media's draft AI policy, then open the floor for the deep, thorny debate the topic deserves. TV Studio
Noon	Lunch Catch up with your colleagues in the radio network during a provided lunch. If you have an idea for a small group discussion or mini training during this time, we'll have a sign-up sheet. If you prefer to relax, eat and chat, that's great too. TV Studio

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

We'll spend the afternoon rotating between breakout sessions, with topics pre-selected by public radio journalists. Spend time learning from and with your colleagues.

1 - 1:45 p.m.	Audition Tips and Tricks with Dave Waldron. Upstairs Conference Room
	Voicing 101 with Lori Townsend and Angela Denning. TV Studio
	Narrative and "Quest" Storytelling with Jeremy Hsieh and Adelyn Baxter. Sunshine Room
2 - 2:45 p.m.	Taking Great Photos While Reporting with Emily Mesner and Valerie Lake. TV Studio
	AI Tools You Can Use with Eric Stone. Upstairs Conference Room
	Audition Tips and Tricks with Crystal Hyde. Sunshine Room

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3 - 3:45 p.m.	How to Get Great Tape with Rachel Cassandra, Hannah Flor and Evan Erickson. Sunshine Room
	AI Tools You Can Use with Eric Stone. Upstairs Conference Room
	How to Bring Your Best to an Editor with Annie Feidt and Kirsten Dobroth. TV Studio
4 - 5 p.m.	Radio Network Annual Meeting What can we do to make the statewide radio network stronger? A network update and discussion with Alaska Public Media's Lori Townsend, Annie Feidt and Kirsten Dobroth. TV Studio
5 - 6 p.m.	Radio Day Reception Debrief with your colleagues over snacks and drinks. Alaska Public Media

THURSDAY 7 P.M. | **UAA WENDY WILLIAMSON AUDITORIUM**



Climate, Culture and Conservation with Katie Orlinsky

Katie Orlinsky, National Geographic Photographer and Explorer, will share her powerful photographic work detailing her journey from conflict photographer to environmental storyteller. From her early career as a conflict photographer to her transformation into an environmental storyteller, Orlinsky's images reveal the profound ways climate change is reshaping the relationship between people, animals, and the land. Followed by a reception co-sponsored by Alaska Photographic Center and The Stoop. Use code AKPRESSCLUB for a 20 percent discount. **Wendy Williamson Auditorium**

Friday, All Media | University of Alaska Anchorage

8:45 a.m.	Welcome Breakfast snacks and hot drinks. Rasmuson Hall Lobby
9:15 - 10:30 a.m.	Human Connection: Documenting Real Life Makes our Stories Stronger Katie Eastman Katie Eastman walks us through what access within a news story can look like, capturing natural moments when someone lets you into their life, and using that trust given to you to bring more humanity to each story. Rasmuson Hall 101
	Immigration Law 101 Michelle Theriault Boots, Lara Nations and Asa Hohman Federal immigration enforcement is making news nationwide. Local journalists often have little experience reporting on the immigration law system, which is separate from and more opaque than federal or state criminal or civil law. Anchorage Daily News journalist Michelle Theriault Boots will speak with experienced local immigration attorneys Lara Nations and Asa Hohman about what reporters should know about immigration law. Theriault Boots, who has covered the Trump administration's crackdown, will also speak about how she's been able to track immigration detention and enforcement in Alaska, and how to find ways into complex immigration stories. Rasmuson Hall 110

10:45 a.m. -
Noon

Ethics and Access for Visual Journalists | Katie Orlinsky

Orlinsky presents her work and discusses navigating access and ethics issues while covering complicated national and international stories over the last 20 years. **Rasmuson Hall 101**

Pitching NPR Q&A | Libby Casey

An informal session on pitching stories to National Public Radio. **Rasmuson Hall 110**

#akleg Panel | Eric Stone, Iris Samuels, Larry Persily

Veteran Alaska State Legislature reporters share tips for getting the story from the statehouse or from akleg.com and Gavel for reporters working far from Juneau. **Rasmuson Hall 211**

12:15 -
1:15 p.m.

LUNCH

Student Showcase

High school and college students are invited to share their recent accomplishments in journalism and documentary work. **Rasmuson Hall 101**

Lunch provided by UAF's Snedden Chair in the Department of Science and Environmental Journalism.

1:30 -
2:45 p.m.

How to Approach First Amendment Stories with Vulnerable Communities | B.A. Parker

From "Freedom of speech has never been for everyone" to "What Mahmoud Khalil's arrest means for everyone," Parker will show how NPR's Code Switch often examines how the First Amendment can be used as both a shield and a weapon for vulnerable communities, and the hurdles that come along with having that ethos. **Rasmuson Hall 101**

What Happens If You Don't Explain Your AI Use? Listening to Audiences Before You Lose Their Trust | Lynn Walsh

Newsrooms are adopting AI, but many audiences are left wondering how and why it's being used. This session from Trusting News focuses on audience listening as the foundation for responsible AI adoption, sharing what news consumers say they want disclosed and how they want to be informed. Learn practical ways to gather feedback, communicate transparently and use AI without sacrificing trust. **Rasmuson Hall 110**

Ethics in Crime Coverage | Kyle Hopkins, Casey Grove, Diana Haecker and Augusta McDonnell

Crime happens everywhere and reporting on it can be complicated. A panel of experienced crime and court journalists from urban and rural Alaska – ADN's Kyle Hopkins, AKPM's Casey Grove, Nome Nugget's Diana Haecker and Alaska's News Source's Augusta McDonnell – will talk about why we report on crime, how to track cases over long periods, ways newsroom approaches have changed and frameworks for making decisions about how stories are told, including what is left out, what must be included and why. They will also discuss navigating pressures from law enforcement and others, especially in small communities. Angela Denning, CoastAlaska's regional news director, will moderate. **Rasmuson Hall 211**

3 - 4:15
p.m.

Understanding the Dual-Management Regulatory Framework of Subsistence in Alaska: How Federal Statutes Impact Alaska Native Subsistence Rights and Uses | Ben Mallott, AFN President, Joe Nelson, AFN Co-Chair, Gayla Hoseth, AFN Co-Chair, and Geoff Toy, AFN Staff Attorney

Untangling the complicated history of federal and state regulation of subsistence hunting and fishing in Alaska, and how Alaska arrived at the “dual management” system as it exists today, where regulatory authority over fish and wildlife is shared by the state and federal governments. The workshop will provide a high-level overview of major federal laws impacting subsistence, how those laws interact with state law, and outline some possibilities for reforms to the system.

Rasmuson Hall 101

You Can't Always Optimize Your Way Out of Burnout | Andy Bickerton

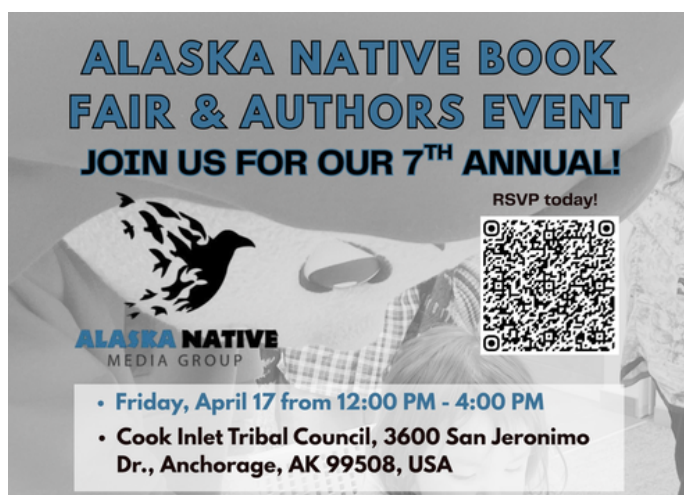
Journalism attracts people who care deeply about mission, impact and serving their communities. But the same passion that makes this work meaningful can also lead to overwhelming stress, burnout and a constant sense of never doing enough. Drawing from personal experience and work across multiple newsrooms, this session hosted by Andy Bickerton (previously with NPR and The Christian Science Monitor) explores the mental health realities of the industry and offers thoughts on a sustainable path forward — one that allows you to keep doing meaningful work while maintaining a healthy quality of life. **Rasmuson Hall 110**

Alaska News Coalition Info Session | Rashah McChesney and Larry Persily

The Alaska News Coalition, a nonprofit formed in 2024 to help newspapers find answers to financial sustainability, will demonstrate its content-sharing platform (StoryShare) for print and online news organizations around the state to share stories and photos. The intent is to provide an organized, easy-to-use, mutually beneficial structure for newsrooms to share and republish stories from around the state at no cost. News Coalition board members also will provide an update on the organization's work and plans. The meeting is open to publishers, general managers, editors, reporters — and anyone else who is curious. **Rasmuson Hall 117**


Public Records Requests | Nat Herz

Alaska investigative journalist Nat Herz explains how to go about requesting documents from state and federal agencies, and how to fit records requests into a daily beat. **Rasmuson Hall 211**



ALASKA NATIVE BOOK FAIR & AUTHORS EVENT
JOIN US FOR OUR 7TH ANNUAL!

RSVP today!



ALASKA NATIVE MEDIA GROUP

- Friday, April 17 from 12:00 PM - 4:00 PM
- Cook Inlet Tribal Council, 3600 San Jeronimo Dr., Anchorage, AK 99508, USA



Conference Survey

**Tell us how it went!
Share your hopes and dreams
for next year?**

4:30 -
5:30 p.m.

Merch Swap and Sale

Bring your newsroom merch for swap or sale. We provide the space and you provide the merch and method for people to purchase. For those bringing swag, there will be some space available for storing items during the day if needed. **Rasmuson Hall Lobby**

Reflections Program Info Session

The Alaska Press Club is developing a new program to support the participation of more homegrown journalists in our industry. Come hear from committee members about a new program with at least \$10,000 in annual funding so far. **Rasmuson Hall 110**



BREAKOUT SESSIONS (4:30-5:30 p.m.): Have an idea for a breakout conversation? See the Breakout Board next to the registration desk to reserve space. Please notify registration about your breakout so that we can promote it.

6:30 -
9:30 p.m.

Press Party at Akela Space

Mingle with fellow journalists over pizza and beer. Many thanks to Moose's Tooth. **Akela Space**, 320 W. Sixth Ave #132F



Recommended
\$5 donation.

Saturday, All Media | University of Alaska Anchorage

8:45 a.m.

Welcome

Breakfast snacks and hot drinks provided by Alaska Press Club.
Rasmuson Hall Lobby

9:15 -
10:15 a.m.

Alaska Press Club Board Meeting

Annual meeting and elections. Interested in volunteering or running for the Alaska Press Club board? Board applications are available at alaskapressclub.com. **Rasmuson Hall 110**

10:30 -
11:45 a.m.

Navigating Threats to Press Freedom in Alaska - Your Constitutional Rights as a Reporter | John McKay, Jamie McGrady and Julia O'Malley

Media lawyer John McKay and federal public defender Jamie McGrady will discuss how to navigate the current reporting environment, spelling out reporters' rights and troubleshooting real-world scenarios journalists have faced recently, including arrest, subpoenas, lawsuits, deportation, seizure of cellphones and cameras and being excluded from government press conferences over coverage issues. Julia O'Malley will facilitate. **Rasmuson Hall 101**

10:30 -
11:45 a.m.

The Urgency of Truth in a World without "Facts" | Moderated by Brad Hillwig

We live in an era of dueling realities. Algorithms reward outrage over accuracy, deepfakes increasingly blur the line between the recorded and the fabricated, and "facts" themselves have become contested terrain, often deployed as weaponized data points rather than accepted as shared ground. What does it mean to practice journalism in this environment? This panel brings together leading Alaska journalists and media experts working on the front lines of an unfolding information crisis as we examine the tension between extreme division, objective truth, and genuine accountability. This conversation is a call to examine how journalists serve the public interest today, and how we might reshape the conditions under which truth can be heard. **Rasmuson Hall 110**

Ten Tips to Transform (Your Writing) | Lynne Snifka

We all want to be better, stronger writers. But reporting never ceases, deadlines loom, editors demand – and sometimes, you simply run out of gas. Luckily, there are habits that can advance your writing in remarkable ways. Join UAF Associate Professor Lynne Snifka for 10 ways to level up your stories. **Rasmuson Hall 117**

Noon -
1 p.m.

LUNCH

Building Community Connection through Grant Funded Projects | Moderated by Kortnie Horazdovsky

From Nome and Unalaska to Anchorage and the State Capitol, Alaska journalists covered relocations and disasters, first Fridays and high school theater, education and energy. Reporters who have received grants from Alaska Center For Excellence in Journalism Fund or taken part in the Legislative Reporter Exchange talk about their projects, and how accessing philanthropy enabled them to connect with community, collaborate with partners, and reach a wider audience. **Rasmuson Hall 101**

1:15 -
2:15 p.m.

KEYNOTE


Journalism's Timeless Power in a Moment of Extreme Change | Libby Casey

In some ways, this is a golden age of visual journalism. A single video clip can ignite a national conversation. We have unprecedented power via the phones in our pockets. And yet, AI, social media companies and oligarch news owners have become existential threats to our profession. So what do we do? Independent journalist Libby Casey will talk about how we keep reporting, leaning on our skills of chasing facts, contextualizing stories, engaging in authentic conversations and taking lessons from creator culture to reach, move and inform audiences. **Rasmuson Hall 101**

2:30 -
3:45 p.m.

Radical Transparency: How Values and Ethics Differentiate Your Newsroom in the Age of AI | Lynn Walsh

As AI-generated content floods the information ecosystem, trust becomes your competitive advantage. This session from Trusting News explores how being consistent and focused on your goals and agenda while having values-driven communication can set your newsroom apart. Learn why transparency isn't just a buzzword but a powerful strategy for building lasting audience trust. **Rasmuson Hall 101**

 **BREAKOUT SESSIONS (2:30-3:45 p.m.):** Have an idea for a breakout conversation? See the Breakout Board next to the registration desk to reserve space. Please notify registration about your breakout so that we can promote it.

4 - 5:15
p.m.

The Roadside Memorial Project: Beyond the Daily Deadline. Finding Fulfillment by Doing ... More? | Katie Eastman

Passion projects can get you through the daily grind, and this one was a newsroom effort. Katie will talk about finding focus for a long-form story, getting buy-in from managers and other journalists, and chipping away at a project over time. **Rasmuson Hall 101**

So You Want To Make an AI Policy... | Sage Smiley

Ethics are the bedrock of modern journalism. As AI tools proliferate, how do we set policies that balance our organizational and personal ethics, embrace the assistive power of the new tech, and communicate to our audience what we use, when, and why? We'll review AI policies from professional news organizations and discuss how to build your own. **Rasmuson Hall 110**

Building Community Through Newsletters | Nat Herz, Julia O'Malley and Tegan Hanlon

What does it take to launch and sustain a newsletter that lasts? Independent journalists Nat Herz, of Northern Journal, and Julia O'Malley, of An Alaska Life, will discuss what they've learned building audiences, engaging readers and managing the businesses of their Alaska newsletters. Alaska Public Media's Digital Managing Editor Tegan Hanlon will facilitate. **Rasmuson Hall 117**

Maintaining the Firewall | Kortnie Horazdovsky and Lori Townsend

Join us for a roundtable discussion on preserving newsroom independence. Gain advice on how to approach relationships with grant funders and shield journalism from the influence of ownership, governments, advertisers and other outside forces. **Rasmuson Hall 211**

Doors Open
6:30 p.m.

Awards Celebration

Announcing winners of the Alaska Press Club contest! The award ceremony, hosted by Ava White and Wesley Early, followed by dancing with music from DJ Spencer Lee. Tickets are \$30 in advance or \$40 at the door, and they include heavy apps and one beer or wine ticket. Tickets sales and donations help pay for the venue, food, drinks, sound equipment and DJ. Thank you for your contribution. **49th State Brewing, 717 W. Third Ave.**



Thank you for being here.

Alaska Press Club Board of Directors

**Angela Denning, Jamie Diep, Kirsten Dobroth, Lizzy Hahn, Vicky Ho,
Theo Greenly, Young Kim, Julia O'Malley, Sage Smiley, Lynne Snifka,
Eric Sowl, Claire Stremple**

Ways to Stay Connected

Your involvement with Alaska Press Club doesn't end when the conference does. Here's how you can stay engaged year round, support local journalism and access valuable resources.

Get the latest news

Stay informed with our newsletters featuring member opportunities and journalism resources. Sign up at our website.

Explore our resources hub

Find tools, guides and other resources tailored for Alaskan journalists at our online resources hub, on our website.

Get involved

Volunteer or join the Alaska Press Club board.

Support local journalism

Your membership, merch purchases and donations help us continue providing training, mentorship and support for Alaska's journalists. Donate to the Alaska Press Club and invest in the future of Alaska journalism.

Learn more by visiting alaskapressclub.com



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Speaker Spotlights

KEYNOTE



Libby Casey is an award-winning journalist working in video and audio and a guest anchor of NPR's newscasts. She was The Washington Post's senior news anchor and a senior manager on its video team, leading live and on-demand journalism across platforms. Libby launched and hosted The Post's first vodcast, "Sidebar," chronicling President Trump's legal battles and the 2024 campaign. Her video work contributed to two Washington Post newsroom Pulitzer Prizes covering the 2024 Butler, Pa. assassination attempt against Trump, and the Jan. 6, 2021 attack on the U.S. Capitol. Before joining The Post, Libby was a national television correspondent for Al Jazeera America and a host of C-SPAN's flagship morning program, "Washington Journal." She started her career as a public radio reporter at KUAC in Fairbanks, AK, and moved to Washington as Alaska Public Media's Washington correspondent.

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA



Lynne Snifka is presenting on behalf of the Snedden Chair of Journalism at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. She has been a working journalist for more than 25 years, beginning in public and commercial TV, then print and online journalism.



Brad Hillwig has more than two decades of journalism, communications and marketing expertise and currently serves as the UAA Atwood Chair of Journalism.

VISITING PRESENTERS



Katie Eastman is the Manager of Storytelling at KOTV in Tulsa, Oklahoma. In this unique position she tells stories herself while mentoring reporters and multimedia journalists. Before this jump into management, she spent 12 years as a general assignment reporter, shooting, writing and editing her work in Des Moines, Albany, Boston, and Denver. She came to Tulsa in 2023 after working at KUSA, where she had the privilege of amplifying the voices of Coloradans across the state. Katie believes in seeking out people she might never meet along her own path. She works to showcase humanity to bring people closer to understanding and connecting with each other.



Katie Orlinsky's work focuses on the human stories of our changing planet. Over the last decade she has been dedicated to exploring how the climate crisis is transforming the relationship between people, animals and the land across the Arctic. Katie is a regular contributor to National Geographic Magazine and an Explorer with the National Geographic Society. Her work is also frequently published in The New York Times, The New Yorker, The Wall Street Journal and Smithsonian Magazine. She has taught photojournalism as a visiting professor at NYU and the University of Alaska Fairbanks.



B.A. Parker is the Ambie-Award winning co-host of NPR's "Code Switch," reporting stories such on racial trauma in horror films, honoring her ancestors, and the efficacy of protest. Prior to joining "Code Switch," she was co-host and lead producer at "The Cut" podcast with New York Magazine. In a previous life, Parker was a film professor at Morgan State University and Stevenson University, where she forced 19-year-olds to watch Point Break and Wong Kar-wai films. She, then, found her way to a production fellowship with the radio show "This American Life."



Lynn Walsh (she/her) is the assistant director at Trusting News and an Emmy Award-winning journalist who has worked in investigative journalism at the national level and locally in California, Ohio, Texas and Florida. She is a former Ethics Chair for the Society of Professional Journalists and a past national president for the organization. Based in San Diego, Lynn is also an adjunct professor and freelance journalist.



SHOUT-OUT TO OUR LOCAL PRESENTERS!

Adelyn Baxter, Andy Bickerton, Michelle Theriault Boots, Rachel Cassandra, Angela Denning, Kirsten Dobroth, Wesley Early, Evan Erickson, Hannah Flor, Annie Feidt, Casey Grove, Diana Haecker, Tegan Hanlon, Nat Herz, Brad Hillwig, Asa Hohman, Kyle Hopkins, Kortnie Horazdovsky, Gayla Hoseth, Jeremy Hsieh, Crystal Hyde, Valerie Lake, Ben Mallott, Rashah McChesney, Augusta McDonnell, Jamie McGrady, Joe Nelson, Rashah McChesney, Jamie McGrady, John McKay, Emily Mesner, Lara Nations, Julia O'Malley, Larry Persily, Iris Samuels, Sage Smiley, Lynne Snifka, Eric Stone, Lori Townsend, Geoff Toy, Dave Waldron and Ava White.

Thank you for sharing your time and talent with
Alaska's journalism community.



Conference Survey

Tell us how it went!
Share your hopes and dreams
for next year?