

# The 2025 Aspen Daily News Impact Report

Tracking the work, the wins and the momentum you made possible.

For more than 45 years, the Aspen Daily News has lived by its founding principle: *If you don't want it printed, don't let it happen.* What began as a leaflet in 1978 has grown into the Roaring Fork Valley's paper of record — fiercely independent, locally owned and unafraid to say the quiet part out loud when accountability demands it.

In a community changing as fast as ours, independent reporting isn't a luxury. It's one of the few things that keeps us connected to each other — and grounded in truth.

Today, we continue that tradition with a renewed commitment to depth, transparency and community listening. Our mission remains the same:  
**TO INFORM, ENGAGE AND EMPOWER THE ROARING FORK VALLEY.**

## Impact at a Glance

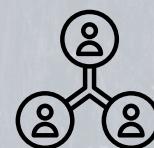
Because of community support, so far in 2025 we've been able to:



Publish more than **1,000** original stories and **31** in-depth Sunday features, plus **63** articles from partner newsrooms (as of Oct. 17).



Launch a **paid internship program** for local students and early-career journalists.



Add **multilingual translation and accessibility tools** to make reporting available to everyone across the Roaring Fork Valley.



Collaborate with Aspen Journalism and Aspen Public Radio to launch the **Social Justice Desk**, expanding coverage of equity and representation.



Serve as a founding partner of the **COWest Noticias Collaborative**, supporting Sol del Valle, our region's standalone Spanish-language newspaper.



**Earn 14 Colorado Press Association awards**, including 1st place for community sponsorship campaign.

# Strengthening the Roaring Fork Valley's next generation of storytellers

Our investment in youth journalism goes beyond training students and ensuring the next generation of reporters feels invested in the valley's future and their role in it.

## A SUMMER IN THE ADN NEWSROOM



Summer intern Hannah Brennan (left) and reporter Lucy Peterson

CU Boulder student **Hannah Brennan** completed a 10-week paid internship, writing 32 stories under ADN mentorship.

*"This internship was more than I could have ever hoped for, allowing me to work on reporting and writing articles daily. From covering local government meetings to arts and culture, I learned how to report with accuracy, clarity and urgency while meeting the newspaper's daily deadlines."*

*"I am especially grateful to the editors and fellow reporters who took the time to mentor me, push me to improve and trust me with meaningful story assignments. Writing on a deadline challenged me to sharpen my interviewing, research and storytelling skills, while also teaching me how*

*local journalism connects communities and equips people with information to make them more informed citizens."*

*"Thank you so much to the Aspen Daily News team for welcoming me and giving me a true hands-on experience in community reporting."*

—Hannah Brennan

This internship exists because of community support.

## COWEST NOTICIAS COLLABORATIVE

This year marked the launch of COWest Noticias, a regional effort to expand bilingual reporting and civic participation. Through bilingual public forums at CMC's Morgridge Commons — featuring leaders like Attorney General Phil Weiser and Commissioner Perry Will — Spanish-speaking residents engaged directly with elected officials, supported by real-time translation and open Q&A. Alongside our media partners, we're building a valley-wide network that ensures every family can access essential information in the language they trust most.

From arts and storytelling to education, performing arts and community advocacy, ADN's collaborations with local nonprofits strengthen the culture and vitality of the Roaring Fork Valley. We don't just cover their work — we help amplify it, partner on events and make sure the stories shaping our valley reach every reader.

*"In-depth reporting of what's happening in Aspen and the surrounding area. I feel I can trust ADN."*

## MEET THE NONPROFITS WE SUPPORT:



AndersonRanch  
arts center®  
create | change

ASPEN FILM  
INDEPENDENT BY NATURE



TACAW



Aspen  
PUBLICRADIO  
91.5 FM | 88.9 FM



English Action  
building community since 1994  
jazz aspen snowmass



THEATRE  
ASPEN

TRTC  
THUNDER RIVER  
THEATRE COMPANY

# What people are saying...

WHEN WE ASKED READERS WHAT ADN MEANS TO THEM, YOU TOLD US LOUD AND CLEAR:

**69%**

SAID THEY'D LOSE A SOURCE OF NEWS THEY CAN'T FIND ANYWHERE ELSE IF WE DISAPPEARED.

**83%**

HAVE SHARED ADN REPORTING WITH FRIENDS OR FAMILY.

**49%**

HAVE SUPPORTED A LOCAL CAUSE OR BUSINESS BECAUSE OF SOMETHING THEY READ HERE.

**35%**

HAVE VOTED OR CHANGED THEIR PERSPECTIVE ON AN ISSUE BECAUSE OF OUR COVERAGE.

*"A paper for the people."*

## Strengthening local news, together

The Aspen Daily News Journalism Fund launched in August 2024 with a simple goal: deepen the reporting our community relies on. Since then, more than **400 friends and neighbors** have contributed a combined **\$308,000**, allowing us to expand coverage, partner with nonprofits, support youth reporters and invest in the tools needed for serious accountability journalism.

These dollars power work that traditional advertising alone can't sustain — from Sunday deep dives to bilingual coverage, civic forums and collaborations throughout the Roaring Fork Valley. This season, your impact can go even further. A generous community member has offered a **\$50,000** match for all gifts made before **December 31**, doubling the difference you make. When you give to ADN, you're investing in journalism that serves everyone in this valley.

### WHERE YOUR DOLLARS GO

Every dollar fuels the work that keeps Aspen informed:

**77% — Reporter salaries:** the people doing the digging, writing and storytelling.

**6% — Sunday features:** deep-dive reporting made possible by the Journalism Fund.

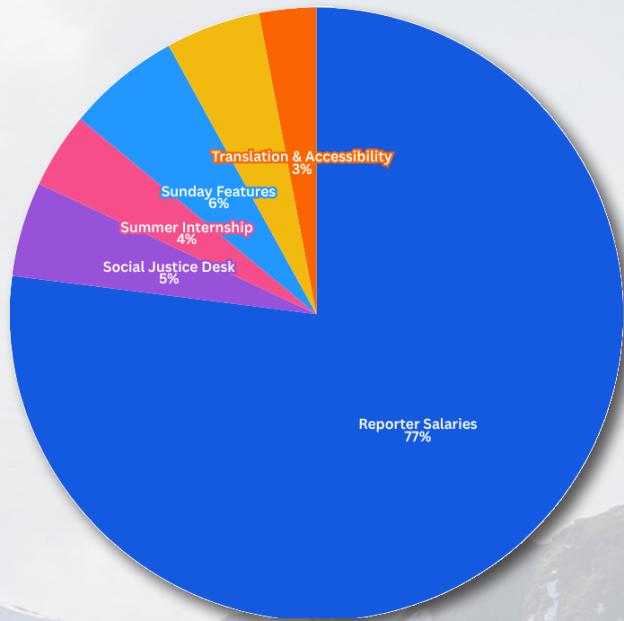
**5% — Social Justice Desk:** strengthening collaboration and coverage through our local partners.

**4% — Summer internship:** mentoring the next generation of journalists.

**3% — Translation tools and community events:** ensuring everyone in our valley stays informed.

**5% — Fiscal stewardship via Tiny News Collective:** providing donor management, transparency and tax-deductible giving.

**Every dollar is local, and every cent is accountable.**



*"A great local newspaper that I've been reading for decades."*

## WHY THE JOURNALISM FUND MATTERS

### FIRST YEAR BY THE NUMBERS

**\$308k+**  
RAISED SINCE LAUNCHING IN AUGUST 2024

**400+**  
DONORS INVESTING IN INDEPENDENT LOCAL NEWS

**\$50,000**  
YEAR-END MATCH NOW, DOUBLING ALL GIFTS THROUGH DEC. 31

Your support powers the reporting, mentorship and community collaborations that keep the Roaring Fork Valley informed — and connected.

# National leaders are paying attention

This year, ADN was selected for competitive programs and partnerships shaping the future of local news—giving us tools and strategies we bring home to better serve the valley.

- Local Media Association's Family & Independent Media Sustainability Lab
- LMA's Funding Journalism Lab
- Finalist for Report for America (Garfield County/public lands/water/wildlife beat)
- Presenter at the Lenfest Philanthropy in News Summit

## What's ahead in 2026

Everything here comes directly from what readers told us they want more of:

- A modernized AspenDailyNews.com
- Expanded downvalley coverage
- Increased accountability + public records reporting
- A new public lands/water/wildlife beat (pending Report for America placement)
- Youth journalism expansion
- More bilingual reporting



ADN's David Cook and Megan Tackett chat with Durango Herald owner Richard Ballentine during the 2024 Colorado Press Association convention in Denver. Cook is president-elect of the CPA board of directors, and Tackett serves on the CPA legislative-advocacy committee. *Courtesy Colorado Press Association.*

## Why Your Support Matters

WITH MORE THAN 500 NONPROFITS SERVING THE ROARING FORK VALLEY, ADN MAKES SURE THEIR WORK IS REPORTED FOR THE WHOLE COMMUNITY. SUPPORTING THE ASPEN DAILY NEWS ISN'T JUST ABOUT JOURNALISM. IT'S ABOUT KEEPING THIS VALLEY INFORMED, CONNECTED AND ENGAGED.

## Giving Tuesday & Colorado Gives Day

If ADN is part of your daily life, we'd be honored to be part of your year-end giving.

Every dollar is matched by a generous Aspen-area donor up to \$50,000—and every new monthly donation started before Dec. 31 is multiplied 12x by the Colorado Gives Foundation. Most donors give \$5-\$20 per month—small amounts that add up to real, lasting impact.



SUPPORT INDEPENDENT LOCAL NEWS:  
[COLORADOGIVES.ORG/STORY/SUPPORTADN](https://coloradogives.org/story/supportadn)

THIS GIVING TUESDAY,  
MAKE IT A #GIVINGNEWSDAY



Aspen Daily News co-owner and publisher David Cook welcomes the crowd and introduces blues legend George Kilby Jr. at Blues & News, our first-ever fundraiser for the Aspen Daily News Journalism Fund at TACAW.

*Courtesy Nick Tininenko*

Action in Africa Fellow George William, who recently earned his degree in mass communications, reviews "Nakuwadde News," the first-place CPA award-winning ADN collaboration. "He studied the entire newspaper, wanting to refine his craft" wrote Action in Africa associate Julie Tripp. "I wanted to share the magnitude of the impact Aspen Daily News had on our community."

Squirm Night, a decades-long election-coverage tradition, made its Wheeler Opera House debut this February—opening the doors to more community members and bringing local democracy to center stage.

*Jason Charme/Aspen Daily News*