

# Looking Back Looking Forward

2024 IMPACT REPORT

**MediaJustice** 

# Message from the Executive Director



Steven Renderos, Executive Director

“ I watched the inauguration of Donald Trump with a knot in my stomach. I thought about my family and what this change in power represented for them. I thought about the staff at MediaJustice who despite the fears are showing so much resolve to fight back. And then I thought about our strategy, seeing tech CEOs line the halls of power like modern day kings.

I realized something important. Our movement's old playbook wouldn't cut it anymore. Not when Silicon Valley is embedding itself so deeply with the state, not when half of Americans trust social media more than traditional news, not when Trump has the tech to deport millions of people.

We knew this moment was coming, that's why last year we set out to put our new strategy, *Shifting Terrain*, to work. We had successes, like our Copaganda Clapback toolkit reaching 500 organizers to hosting the largest ever Take Back Tech gathering. That affirms my belief that despite the challenge of the moment, in 2025 MediaJustice is ready to build the collective power needed to reclaim our digital future. ”

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## Our Impact, Our Story

Your support helped turn understanding into action. Together, we built momentum for lasting change bringing hundreds of supporters together, taking action alongside tech workers with community leaders, and fighting campaigns that put people before profits in our digital world.

As the new year begins, we invite you to reflect on the progress we made this year and consider supporting our continued work to transform the digital landscape into one that serves all our communities.



Part 1

# Looking Back

## FY 2024 - PRESENT

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# A New Generation of Media Justice Leaders

In FY24, we graduated the second class of MediaJustice Network Fellows at a ceremony in Connecticut that featured keynote speaker, Makani Themba.

“I've developed a range of new skills related storytelling, and organizing to end media miss information, which have not only advanced my career but also deepened my commitment to media justice. I have gained a deeper understanding of the colonialism, power and responsibility of media in shaping public opinion. Most importantly how the global south is a victim of many agendas of media mis-information.”

-- Fellow Graduate

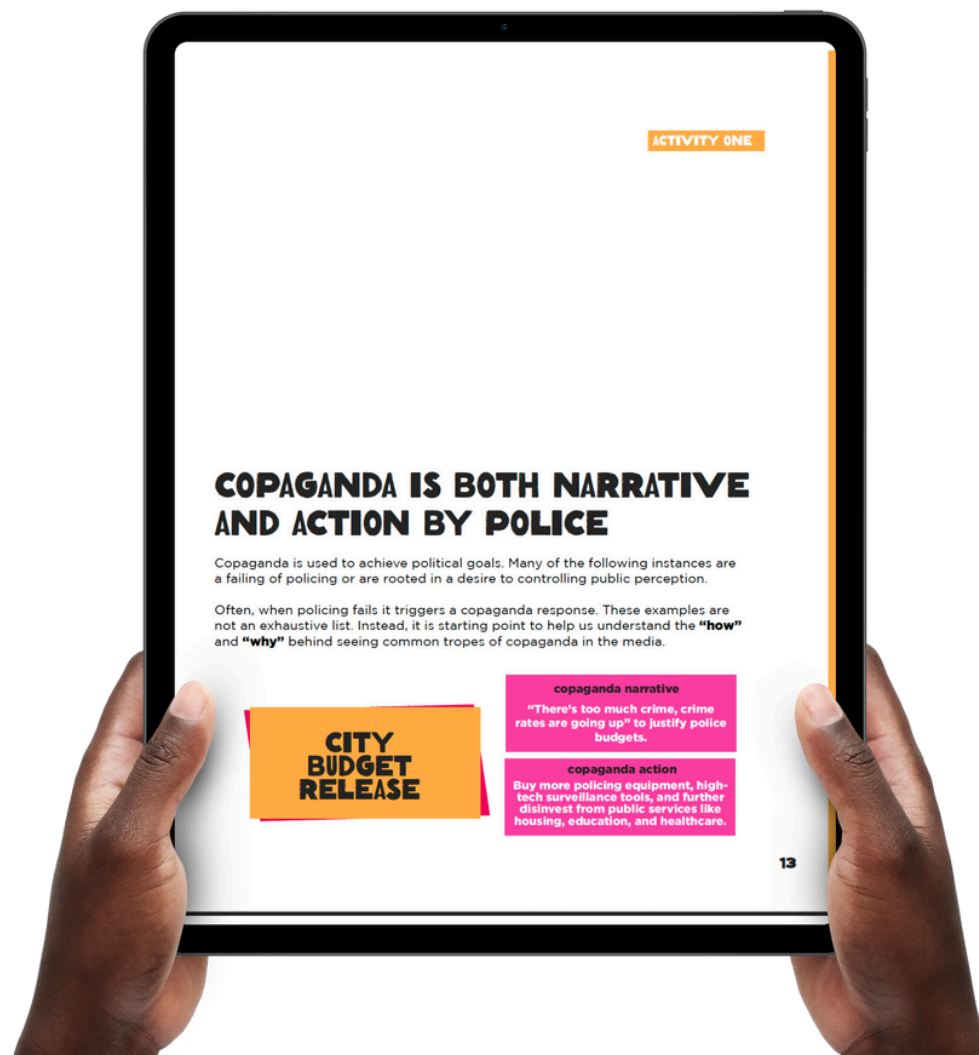




# Disinfo Toolkit: Copaganda Clapback

The Copaganda Clapback toolkit, developed in partnership with the Technology and Social Change Project and the Disinformation Defense League, helps communities fight back against police-generated propaganda in media. Built from listening sessions with members of the MediaJustice Network, the toolkit provides case studies and practical strategies to analyze how police departments shape public narratives through their marketing budgets and media relationships.

**In FY24, we conducted four regional trainings that reached over 500 participants, equipping organizers with tools to challenge police narratives in their local media ecosystems.**



# A Documentary: Deeper than a Div/de:

In April, we premiered a new short film called Deeper Than A Div/de which explores the Digital Divide in the Black Rural South through the eyes and voices of the community of Utica, Mississippi, as they navigate a post-pandemic, remote, online world with no accessible internet. In the Black Rural South, 38% of African Americans report they lack home internet access.

“ Access is thought about like, you know, we’re fine with being last on all the worst statistics in the country. As long as the power doesn’t shift, as long as power remains where the power has always been. ”

-- Carlton Turner, Co-Director and Lead Artist at Sipp Culture



# Take Back Tech

MediaJustice and Mijente co-hosted Take Back Tech II in June 2024, a two-and-a-half-day convening bringing together organizers, advocates, and workers from communities impacted by criminalization and surveillance, policy, advocacy, legal organizations, and the tech industry. Usually, tech conferences are hosted by huge corporations, looking to congratulate themselves and center bottom line profits.

At Take Back Tech, on the other hand, we strengthened our collective courage and the strategies needed in the fight against Big Tech. It was an incredibly diverse space of organizers, students, tech workers, teachers, local representatives, lawyers, professors, engineers, authors, and researchers.

**Together, Mijente and MediaJustice hosted 40 workshops with 70+ presenters, 4 plenary panels, and 450 participants. We had folks participating from across 136 cities in the U.S. and 4 other countries.**







# Black Future Newsstand

The Black Future Newsstand brought a radical vision of media justice to Chicago's historic Bronzeville. This installation, created with Media2070 and Black River Life, mixed archival Black press materials with police surveillance records to reveal how media and law enforcement have shaped and distorted Black narratives.

The event drew over 600 people to Gallery Guichard, where Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Trina Reynolds-Tyler joined Smithsonian-featured artist Yohance Lacour and MediaJustice's board chair Joseph Torres to tackle how media shapes power. From examining 1950s copies of JET magazine to exploring modern surveillance tactics, the installation connected past struggles to present fights for media justice.

“The Black Future Newsstand is an invitation for people to dream and imagine a media system that is a lot different from our own. A media system where stories of Black people are affirmed and uplifted.”

-- Eteng Ettah, MJ Narrative and Communications Director

Part 2

# Looking Forward

## 2025 & Beyond

# America in Crisis: Tech Power Meets State Control



Trump's return to power in 2025 marks tech leaders' shift from free market rhetoric to nationalist alliances. Beyond Musk's public embrace of Trump and other far-right leaders globally, tech companies will position AI and digital infrastructure as tools of national security and control. They are building data centers that will drain local resources, while expanding surveillance systems, and dominating information flows across platforms.

The field of resistance stands fractured, with groups working in isolation and facing increased pressure under a hostile administration. But this political upheaval opens doors for new alliances and bold resistance strategies that weren't possible when the system seemed more stable.

# What We Must Do: Tell our Story, Build our Fight

Trump's return marks a critical moment where tech companies are converting political chaos into corporate control. But crisis creates opportunity. Through research, educational tools, and strategic communications, we'll help movements understand how tech corporations enable state violence and extraction. We'll conduct field visits, launch political education programs, and mobilize rapid response campaigns to grow a movement that sees tech and media as key battlegrounds for justice. By connecting local fights against data centers and surveillance to national advocacy, we'll build power to challenge how corporations and governments shape our digital future.



## The impact we seek in 2025:

- ▶ Expose tech companies' harms while amplifying community resistance stories through strategic media placement, messaging guides, and rapid response communications.
- ▶ Reach 2,000 organizers with analysis and tools to fight tech expansion through new training programs, resistance case studies, and political education materials.
- ▶ Unite isolated local struggles into coordinated resistance by mapping tech expansion, supporting frontline fights, and building new cross-movement alliances.

# Strengthen Resilience

Progressive organizations will face increased scrutiny and potential attacks on our work. We will strengthen MediaJustice's systems and practices to protect our mission while building the infrastructure needed to drive impact at scale. As traditional funding sources shift in this hostile climate, we'll also diversify our resource base to sustain our movement building work.

## Build Resilience by:

Revamping our rapid response protocols and upgrade our digital infrastructure.

Adding capacity by hiring a new Head of Programs and expanding our development and finance team.

Hosting a restorative retreat for our staff to deepen internal relationships.



Part 3

# Gratitude & Call to Action

# Join Us

We envision a world where media and technology amplify the voices of oppressed people, serve the many rather than the few, and empower social movements to create lasting change. This work demands courage, creativity, and an unwavering commitment to freedom. **To frontline communities: we remain accountable to your experience. To policy experts: your knowledge is crucial. To everyone who dreams of a just digital world: we need you with us.**

**Give today.**

**MediaJustice needs your support to address unprecedented challenges in Trump's first 100 days. Your investment will help us address these challenges by funding these key priorities over the next six months.**

- The coordination of a response network connecting organizations across the media and tech justice terrain to respond to attacks on Palestinians, Immigrants, and Black people anticipated within the first 100 days of the Trump administration.
- The planning and framework for visioning circles to develop a shared, long-arc vision for democratic media and technology, starting with a project to develop alternative, abolitionist tech futures. Design parameters to ensure that future visions do not simply outsource tech harms to already exploited regions or communities, especially Indigenous communities or people in the global south

# Acknowledgements

**MediaJustice would like to acknowledge and thank our institutional partners for your time and financial investment to make this work possible. Your unwavering support of our mission and strategic vision is a testimony to the transformational impact we have made together over the last year together.**

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Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice

Ford Foundation

Democracy Fund

MacArthur Foundation

California Endowment

Heising Simons Foundation

Wellspring Philanthropic Found

Omidyar

The Libra Foundation

Internet Society Foundation

Rosenberg Foundation

CS Fund

Borealis Philanthropy

National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA)

Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation

Voqal Chicago

Virga Foundation

Navigation Fund

Global Dialogue

Media Democracy Fund

Mission Telecom

Center on Race and Digital Justice



# Thank you!

Contact us if there are any questions.

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