

## **VALID SOURCES**

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### **‘Valid Sources’ Formed to Promote Quality Journalism National Project Investigates ‘Who Needs Newspapers?’**

ASHLAND, ORE. (May 12, 2010) – Six professional media managers and educators, concerned about maintaining the quality of journalism, have formed Valid Sources, a non-profit organization that identifies and promotes excellent, ethically balanced journalism.

Valid Sources’ initial project – “Who Needs Newspapers?” – is a systematic report to gauge the business health and reporting focus of a sampling of local newspapers across the United States. The findings will be presented at [www.whoneedsnewspapers.org](http://www.whoneedsnewspapers.org) beginning in September 2010.

“We decided to look at what’s happening to local newspapers since that’s where most of the basic information used by the wire services, Google, Yahoo and the Internet comes from,” said Paul Steinle, president of Valid Sources.

“There is a misconception that news is a free commodity,” said Steinle. “Actually, most of the quality information we get is based on reporting that comes from paid professionals at newspapers. So what is happening to these businesses may determine the quality of reporting we can expect in the future.

“By visiting some of these newspapers, we hope to capture the story of this struggle to stay solvent and still maintain their quality.”

The “Who Needs Newspapers?” project will explore the story of one local newspaper from each of the 50 states, citing the innovations each is using to stay competitive. Each report will feature video interviews with the newspaper’s publisher and top editors, a snapshot of the newspaper’s reporting staff and samples of its best enterprise reporting.

Newspapers will be selected from a list of general excellence winners from state and regional press associations and will reflect a variety of circulation and ownership categories.

Valid Sources was formed by Sara Brown, Ph.D., a 30-year veteran of the newspaper industry as a human resource professional, management trainer, columnist and educator; Paula Duffy, former director of the University of Chicago Press; Bruce Garrison, Ph.D., professor in the School of Communication at the University of Miami who has taught journalism since 1975; Sig Splichal, Ph.D., chair of the journalism program at the University of Miami; Paul Steinle, retiring associate provost at Southern Oregon University and former president of UPI; and Georgiana Vines, retired associate editor of the Knoxville News Sentinel.

Brown and Steinle will drive across the country to compile the reports that will comprise the “Who Needs Newspapers?” website. Their reporting will be guided by a board of associate consulting editors who will oversee their work.

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