

For Immediate Release**Nation's Media Innovators and Thought Leaders to Gather at
First Annual Conference of Montclair State University's
Center for Cooperative Media**

The Future of Local News is Focus of National Event on April 24 and 25, 2014

Montclair, NJ. April 21, 2014 – Montclair State University and the Center for Cooperative Media, an initiative of the University's School of Communication and Media, will host a conference for national media innovators and thought leaders on April 24 and 25, 2014.

The first annual conference, with its theme of "Innovating the Local News Ecosystem," will explore the future of local news in a continually evolving media environment.

"This is the first of what will be, over the coming years, frequent opportunities for an important national conversation that the Center will host about challenges and opportunities facing local media today," said Merrill Brown, director of Montclair State's School of Communication and Media. "There's been too much emphasis on the local struggle and not enough attention focused on what's been learned and on what's going right. This conference will help fill that void."

Eric Newton, senior adviser to the president of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, will open the conference on the evening of Thursday, April 24, with a keynote address on the future of media from a foundation's perspective.

Friday, April 25, will be filled with a daylong program of panel discussions. Brown, who helped launch Court TV and was a founding editor of MSNBC.com, will kick off the conversation by moderating "The New Normal," a panel discussion exploring how a changing local media landscape will shape the future of local journalism.

Joining Brown's panel will be media analyst Ken Doctor; *USA Today* President and Publisher Larry Kramer; Tiffany Schackleford, the executive director of the Association of Alternative Newsmedia; and Jim Brady, editor-in-chief of Digital First Media.

According to Ju-Don Marshall Roberts, director of the Montclair State University Center for Cooperative Media and the conference's organizer, many of the biggest national media organizations, such as *The New York Times*, Huffington Post, National Public Radio and BuzzFeed, will join prominent local and regional organizations, including NJ.com, *Boston Globe*, NJTV and Oakland Local, on panels addressing such topics as the information needs of communities; the future of local advertising; collaborative investigations; scaling local media; revenue models for local media; and more.

Jeff Jarvis, director of the Tow-Knight Center for Entrepreneurial Journalism at the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism, will conclude the conference by leading a town hall on the future of journalism.

"This conference reflects the mission of the Center for Cooperative Media," said Roberts, "As the media industry continues to change or contract, it's more important than ever to find new ways to foster collaboration and sustainability so that local media can best serve the needs of the public interest."

People who cannot attend the conference in person will be able to watch select panels through streaming video on njnewscommons.org or they can follow the conference hashtag, #innovatelocal, on Twitter.

The conference has been made possible by the generous support of Montclair State University, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

There is no fee for the Innovating the Local News Ecosystem Conference, but registration is required. To register for the conference or to view the complete schedule of events, go to www.njnewscommons.org/innovatelocal.

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About Montclair State and the Center for Cooperative Media

Building on a distinguished 106-year history, **Montclair State University** is proud to be a leading institution of higher education in New Jersey. The University's six colleges and schools serve more than 19,500 undergraduate and graduate students in 300 majors, minors, concentrations and certificate programs.

The Center for Cooperative Media, launched in 2012 by the School of Communication and Media, reflects the School's commitment to media innovation and journalistic collaboration. The Center, through its numerous media partners, serves New Jersey's news ecosystem and is a focal point for expanding news and information in the state. It receives support from the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.