



## **Clare A. Roth Named Managing Editor of The Ohio Newsroom, Ohio's Largest Daily Statewide Radio and Digital News Service**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**TOLEDO, OHIO – (July 8, 2022)** – Award-winning journalist Clare Roth was chosen to lead The Ohio Newsroom, becoming the first managing editor to take the editorial reins for Ohio's largest daily statewide news collaborative. Roth, a seasoned journalist, will coordinate the journalistic work of Ohio's network of public radio newsrooms to cover the many "news deserts" in the state that typically don't have coverage and pull stories that would not have otherwise been told, and share them statewide.

"Clare brings creative energy, editorial heft, and a collaborative spirit to this critical role," said Wendy Turner, general manager, Ohio Public Media Services. "She's a strategic thinker and coalition builder, which are essential attributes for building this initiative and meeting this moment."

Roth was most recently news editor at WFPL in Louisville, Ky. where she oversaw coverage of health, education, the environment, and Southern Indiana. She began her career as a producer for Iowa Public Radio, having returned to her native state after graduating from the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University. At Iowa Public Radio, Roth booked interviews with everyone from pig farmers to presidential candidates. From there she worked at NPR member station WOSU in Columbus, Ohio where she hosted "All Things Considered" and anchored the daily drive-time program, election nights, breaking news, and the occasional talk show. The state's Associated Press Media Editors Association named her their broadcast rising star and best radio host in back-to-back years.

"I started my career at a statewide station, and it taught me what a difference public radio can make in news deserts," said Roth. "It also drove home how good journalism can help create community and connection across county lines."



The Ohio Newsroom is a formal collaboration of Ohio's existing network of public radio newsrooms that creates a sustainable model offering news coverage. Coverage includes news from rural areas, towns, and municipalities that are not typically covered as widely and frequently as the urban "C-Cities Corridor" of Cleveland, Columbus and Cincinnati. The collaborative consists of Ideastream Public Media (Cleveland), WOSU Public Media (Columbus) and WYSO (Yellow Springs), Cincinnati Public Radio (Cincinnati), WCSU (Wilberforce, Ohio), WGTE (Toledo), and WYSU (Youngstown).

The Ohio Newsroom is backed by grants from The George Gund Foundation and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. In addition, the project is supported by founding funders including the Reitman Family, Margie and John Wheeler, Ohio Humanities, and The James W. and Anne H.S. Nethercott Public Media and Responsible Journalism Fund of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation

### **The Need in Ohio**

No other state has experienced the radical changes in journalism to the extent Ohio has, according to research published by Policy Matters Ohio. Since 2004, more than 100 newspapers across the state have shuttered and total circulation in the state fell by 47% from 5.5 million to 2.9 million. The loss of news reporting resources has been felt most deeply outside the major urban areas of Cleveland, Columbus and Cincinnati. Where small town papers previously flourished, local news in most of the state is a shadow of what it once was.

### **Solution: Putting the Pieces together**

The Ohio Newsroom is structured based on research and modeling funded by The George Gund Foundation and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for expanding local journalism in Ohio. That process indicated that many of the elements and infrastructure are in place and that a coordinated and organized collaboration Ohio's public radio stations can expand news capacity, cover areas that aren't being covered in the current environment, and achieve greater scale.

"Ohio's public media stations reach more than 95% of Ohio's population and dozens of signals that span the state," said Richard Eiswerth, president, general manager and CEO, Cincinnati Public Radio. "The editorial teams are communicating and collaborating, but the hard work of getting the editorial teams to operate as one remains undone."

Ongoing, productive relationships between public media stations in Ohio is a key strength identified in the modeling. Roth's role as a managing editor will be to lead the



charge and organize the group with shared goals, strategic priorities and tactical execution.

“So many of the new journalism models require starting from the ground-up,” said Ronnie Agnew, general manager at WOSU and member of the search committee. “The Ohio Newsroom is not a bright, shiny new object, but rather a reorganization of existing assets and partnerships to address the challenges of the new environment.”

### **Telling the Whole Story**

The loss of news reporting resources in smaller communities coupled with the concentration of reporting in major metro areas can skew the portrait of Ohio’s diversity and complexity. The Ohio Newsroom is taking a broader approach by directing reporting resources to the underrepresented and marginalized communities by surfacing stories and issues of relevance to all Ohioans.

“Clare Roth has a particular talent for pulling diverse voices into stories beyond pre-conceived narratives,” said Ideastream Public Media President and CEO, Kevin Martin. “Her proven experience of finding the nuances and variety of perspectives will be invaluable to The Ohio Newsroom.”

The core goal of The Ohio Newsroom is to expand the frequency, quality and depth of reporting available to all public radio stations to address the issues that can make Ohio better for all involved. As Ohio’s largest newsroom, it is positioned to cover, uncover, and illuminate the most important issues, events, and stories affecting the lives of all Ohioans.

The Ohio Newsroom showcased the effort for regional expansion this spring with *Disconnected Democracy*, the first marquee editorial project of the Ohio Newsroom. *Disconnected Democracy* surfaced stories of political polarization and civic engagement by showcasing ordinary Ohioans from all over the state. Six of the nine people profiled for the series reside outside of the central urban areas.

Roth will start her position as Managing Editor for The Ohio Newsroom on July 25.



**About**

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