

Reflecting on Ten Years of Bridge Michigan



2006-2010: The nonprofit Center for Michigan launches with a mission to engage and inform Michigan residents and amplify citizen voices in the halls of power. The Center executes the “Michigan’s Defining Moment” public engagement campaign, involving more than 10,000 diverse statewide residents in identifying priorities for the state’s future.

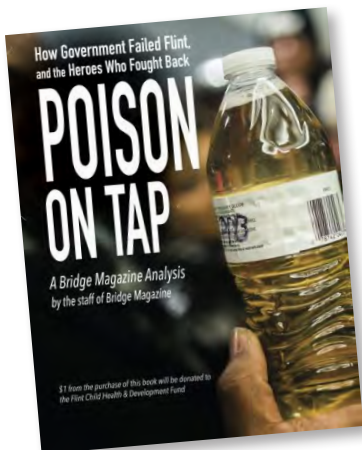
2011: Bridge Magazine launches with one editor, one reporter, and a digital-only mission to publish a weekly policy-oriented news report to help fill a growing gap in in-depth news coverage as newspapers endure business decline and deep staff cuts.

2012: Bridge Magazine’s first major investigation, “Michigan’s 30,000 Forgotten Four Year Olds,” documents how Michigan’s public preschool program greatly underserves eligible children. Bridge earns 23,000 monthly readers.



2013: In response to “Michigan’s 30,000 Forgotten Four Year Olds” and a statewide advocacy effort, Michigan doubles its public preschool program and has since served tens of thousands of additional four-year-olds. Bridge expands to include five full-time journalists.

2014: The Small Business Association of Michigan honors Bridge as “Communicator of the Year” and Wayne State University names Bridge “Journalist of the Year,” concluding, “Much of the best and significant journalism in this state is being done at Bridge.” Bridge averages 58,000 readers per month and reader donations nearly double to \$54,500.



2015: Depth of coverage expands in education, the economy, public policy, government watchdogging, and vulnerable children and families. Bridge Magazine grows to 71,000 monthly readers.

2016: Bridge Magazine publishes “Poison on Tap,” the first book on the Flint Water Crisis, with an exhaustive timeline built from thousands of government emails. The state-appointed committee charged with investigating Flint deems Bridge’s timeline a fundamental tool in understanding the crisis. Our Flint reporting earns the McCree Award for Advancement of Justice as Bridge also earns “Newspaper of the Year” honors from the Michigan Press Association. Bridge grows to 100,000 monthly readers. Reader donations surpass \$100,000.



Bridge Michigan earns its 4th consecutive Michigan Press Association "Newspaper of the Year" award and the Sierra Club's "Journalist of the Year" award. (2017)

2017: Bridge's first documentary, "Michigan Divided," portrays the perspectives of diverse statewide residents split between Trump supporters and opponents. The film earns a regional Emmy Award.

2018: Bridge's Michigan Truth Tour informs tens of thousands of statewide voters and earns the Michigan Press Association's top public service award. Change-inducing Bridge investigations document Michigan gerrymandering and stop inequitable state Medicaid work rules and political attempts to rewrite social studies learning standards. Audience nearly doubles. Reader donations surpass \$200,000.

2019: Bridge Michigan (the "new" name evolved from "Bridge Magazine") exposes how the Michigan Legislature doled out more than \$100 million to politically connected beneficiaries, triggering transparency reforms. Bridge Michigan earns its 4th consecutive Michigan Press Association "Newspaper of the Year" award and the Sierra Club's "Journalist of the Year" award. Reader membership revenues total \$290,000.

2020: Expanding to a six-day-a-week publishing frequency, the entire Bridge Michigan staff produces hundreds of multi-dimensional reports on the pandemic. A second publication, BridgeDetroit, launches to amplify the issues and priorities of Detroit residents. Reader membership revenues more than double to \$766,000 as Bridge Michigan experiences 5X growth in readership to 1.5 million per month.

2021: Bridge Michigan continues daily publication as BridgeDetroit grows to three-times-weekly. We open a downtown Ypsilanti office for business, newsroom, and public engagement operations.



...Bridge Michigan experiences 5X growth in readership to 1.5 million per month. (2020)



Center for Michigan offices in Ypsilanti