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JANUARY MEETING

Award-Winning Media Pros to Speak at 15th Anniversary Meeting

BY WILLIAM TERRELL

Although investigative reporting goes back 100 years to the time when reporters often solved crimes before police did, we know it best from Woodward and Bernstein's exposure of the Watergate break-in. And it was the Watergate investigation that originally led one of our January 9 speakers, Laura S. Washington, to the field of investigative reporting.

Washington, familiar to many through her frequent appearances on John Calloway's *Chicago Tonight* and Joel Weisman's *Chicago Week in Review*, is currently editor and publisher of the *Chicago Reporter*, an investigative monthly focusing on issues of discrimination and poverty in Chicago and its suburbs. Some recent stories the *Reporter* has covered include hate crimes, the slighting of minorities in the distribution of park district monies, discrimination in institutions rewarding contracts and providing services, and the miserable living conditions of Latino workers at Arlington Race Track.

"I initially got into the field for the glamour of it," Washington said, "but it's not as glamorous as it's cracked up to be." Sticking with it, however, she served from 1980 to 1985 as education reporter, assignment editor, and managing editor of the *Chicago Reporter*. In 1985 she was appointed

deputy press secretary to Mayor Harold Washington, and from 1987 to 1990, she was producer for Pam Zekman's investigative unit at WBBM-TV. In 1990 she returned to the *Chicago Reporter* as editor, and in 1994, she was named to her current position as editor and publisher of the *Reporter*. During her more than fifteen years as an investigative reporter, Washington has garnered numerous awards including two Chicago Emmys, the Peter Lisagor and Jacob Scher award for outstanding journalism, the James P. McGuire award for outstanding achievement in the media from the American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois, and the 1995 Matrix award for outstanding achievement in communications from Women in Communications, Inc. Washington also received a journalism fellowship in urban and minority education from the Ford Foundation.

She is a member of the local and national chapters of Association of Black Journalists, chairperson of the Community Media Workshop, and a board member of Investigative Reporters and Editors, Inc., a national organization founded in response to the murder by car bomb of an

investigative reporter in Arizona. Among other services, I.R.E. accumulates demographic data and provides a database for reference by its members.

Our second speaker, Thom Clark is cofounder and president of Community Media Workshop, which since 1989 has trained over 300 nonprofit organizations to use media more effectively. The Columbia College-based CMW also publishes the popular guide to access to movers and shakers in the local media *Getting on the Air & Into Print: A Citizen's Guide to Chicago Area Media*.

In addition to his work at CMW, Clark cohosts WNUA's weekly *City Voices*. During his 20 years of work in the nonprofit sector, Clark served a six-year stint as editor of *The Neighborhood Works*, winning many awards for journalistic excellence, including a Lisagor award for editorial writing. He has also operated his own freelance editorial and photography business, Bryan Clark Ink.

Don't miss hearing these award-winning journalists at IWOC's 15th anniversary meeting. There'll be extra treats commemorating this event, and each attendee will receive a memento of the occasion. #