

EMBARGOED UNTIL 12:01 A.M. ET, February 7, 2024

For further information, contact:

Maya Brod, 301-467-4917

mbrod@burness.com

**Two Freelance Journalists Awarded Nation's Largest Media Prize
for Powerful Coverage of Underrepresented Communities**

Writer Dara T. Mathis and Photojournalist Tamir Kalifa Recipients of \$100,000 American Mosaic Journalism Prize

Los Altos, Calif. (February 7, 2024)—The Heising-Simons Foundation announced today that freelance journalists Dara T. Mathis and Tamir Kalifa are the recipients of the [2024 American Mosaic Journalism Prize](#), which includes an unrestricted cash prize of \$100,000 for each winner. This is the largest dollar amount given for a journalism prize in the United States.

The prize is awarded for excellence in long-form, narrative or deep reporting about underrepresented and/or misrepresented groups in the United States. It recognizes journalism's ability to foster understanding and aims to support freelance journalists. The prize is based on confidential nominations invited from more than 150 leaders in journalism throughout the country. A panel of 10 judges—including journalists from NBC News, The New Yorker and The Texas Tribune, among others—selected this year's award winners.

Mathis and Kalifa join a distinguished group of past recipients of this prestigious award, including Cerise Castle, Darcy Courteau, David Dennis Jr., Valeria Fernández, Michelle García, Rachel Kaadzi Ghansah, Ryan Christopher Jones, Jaeah Lee, Rebecca Nagle, Julian Brave NoiseCat, Abe Streep and Carvell Wallace.

About Dara T. Mathis:

Mathis is a writer and journalist whose work examines parenthood, identity and linkages to Black memory. Her January 2023 article for The Atlantic, "[A Blueprint for Black Liberation](#)," draws from personal experience growing up in a commune to illuminate a broader social history of Black Nationalist communal experiments. She is currently working on a memoir on the same subject, chronicling her family history in a radical Black commune—and how liberation movements can shatter and transform the way we imagine the world.

Mathis' work has appeared in The New York Times, The Atlantic, The Week, Romper, Blackbird and other outlets. She lives in Maryland.

"As a Black writer, I am keenly aware of how the stories of marginalized people are excluded from the archive," said Mathis. "My work as a journalist seeks to connect silenced histories to our present day. Narrative storytelling feels even more urgent in 2024, considering that censorship and book bans heavily target Black and LGBTQ+ writers."

About Tamir Kalifa:

Kalifa is a freelance photojournalist who has documented communities impacted by gun violence, the U.S.-Mexico border, civil unrest, environmental issues such as the Maui fire and political campaigns. Over the past two years, a focus of Kalifa's work has been capturing the [aftermath of the Robb Elementary School shooting](#) in Uvalde, Texas, centering the collective [mourning and mobilization of this tightly knit community](#).

His photography and writing have appeared in The New York Times, The Washington Post, Politico, CNN, Texas Monthly and others.

"I have spent the last few years attempting to create photojournalism that is honest and honors the resilience of individuals enduring tragedy," said Kalifa. "Exercising patience and care have been foundational to my work, especially in Uvalde, and I'm profoundly honored to receive the American Mosaic Journalism Prize for it. This recognition deepens my commitment to compassionate storytelling that highlights our shared humanity and invokes empathy. I feel it comes with a great responsibility to pay forward the lessons I've learned, to inspire others to create nuanced journalism that goes well beyond the news cycles and to use the camera as a tool for good."

For more information about the **American Mosaic Journalism Prize**, visit <https://www.hsfoundation.org/prize>.

The Heising-Simons Foundation launched the American Mosaic Journalism Prize in 2018 as part of its work supporting journalism as a critical element of a healthy and multicultural democracy. It is part of a portfolio of journalism grants supporting and elevating underrepresented voices, groups, and content in journalism, which includes support of TransLash, Futuro Media, Journalisms, The 19th and Radio Ambulante, among others.

###

2024 American Mosaic Journalism Prize Judges**Rose Arce**

Vice President, Soledad O'Brien Productions

Katherine Boo

Contributing Editor, The New Yorker

Graham Lee Brewer

National Writer, Race and Ethnicity Team,
The Associated Press

Sewell Chan

Editor-in-Chief, The Texas Tribune

Stephanie Foo

Journalist and Author

Antonia Hylton

Correspondent, NBC News

Lily Jamali

Senior Reporter, Marketplace

Alexis Madrigal

Co-Host, KQED Forum

Wesley Lowery

Executive Editor, The Investigative
Reporting Workshop

Daniella Zalcmán

Documentary Photographer and Founder of
Women Photograph

About the Heising-Simons Foundation

The Foundation works with its many partners to advance sustainable solutions in climate and clean energy, enable groundbreaking research in science, enhance the education of our youngest learners, address the impact of technology on society, and support human rights for all people. For more information, visit www.hsfoundation.org.