

Justin Agrelo

Justin.Agrelo@gmail.com • Justinagrelo.com

Journalism Experience

The Trace

Community Engagement Reporter

Chicago, Illinois
May 2022- Present

- Designing and running a writing fellowship for survivors of gun violence to be paid to learn storytelling skills and tell their own stories on their own terms; developing an impactful, engaging and trauma-informed writing curriculum to be used at group workshops as well as in our one-on-one coaching sessions
- Pitching, reporting, writing, editing, and fact-checking news stories on gun violence for digital and print publication, reaching over 15,000 readers online; finding documents, data, and sources through public records requests and community engagement to uncover breakdowns in governmental systems and policy
- Spearheading our monthly Chicago newsletter by writing profiles, solutions journalism, Q&As, dispatches, and explainers on topics of gun violence and public safety; grew newsletter readership over 120 percent
- Surveying Chicago residents affected by gun violence about their news diet and information needs; using responses to create a database of feedback that informs my reporting and writing

City Bureau

Housing Reporter

Chicago, Illinois
March 2020- April 2021

- Published an in-depth series on the impacts of COVID-19 on housing and evictions in Chicago; won two Peter Lisagor Awards for Best Feature Series and Best Feature Reporting on COVID-19
- Led a team of three emerging journalists in an intensive community engagement and data project where we used court records to find people facing evictions to share their experiences
- Wrote solutions stories on how policy makers could combat the impending eviction crisis as well as utility stories on what renters could do to navigate pandemic-related housing issues
- Planned two virtual panels that highlighted the impacts of and solutions to Chicago's housing crisis, bringing together housing organizers, lawyers, city representatives, and residents for an interactive and informative discussion; partnered with Univision Chicago to offer the panel in Spanish

Mother Jones Magazine

Editorial Fellow

San Francisco, California
June 2019- February 2020

- Wrote short daily stories as well as long-form features for the online and print magazines, covering topics such as race, gender, labor, climate change, immigration, and culture
- Fact-checked daily stories for online and deeply-reported investigations for the print magazine, ensuring every story was accurate, fair, and contextual
- Created engaging social media posts on the Mother Jones Instagram and Twitter accounts using SEO and other metrics to increase engagement and brand awareness

Medill News Service

Reporter, Latinx Communities

Chicago, Illinois
June 2018- June 2019

- Developed and maintained close relationships with a diverse set of sources, ranging from government leaders to activists, academics, workers, and other journalists
- Designed a news beat on issues affecting Chicago's Latinx communities with a specific focus on Puerto Rico, immigration, and local politics

Education & Honors

Northwestern University Medill School of Journalism

June 2018- June 2019