

# What's your problem?

A question to start and stay on track



# CT Mirror - Your School database

**Central High School** Bridgeport School District

1 Lincoln Blvd. in Bridgeport CT  
[website](#) ☎ 203-576-7377  
Grades: 9 10 11 12

### Who goes here?

Here's a look at how the student population has changed over time at Central High School, in similar schools, and in schools statewide. To determine "similar schools" we used the state's district reference group, or DRG, classification for the school.

Category	2011-12	2016-17
<b>Central High School</b>	2,181	1,515
asian	4%	4%
black	40%	41%
white	10%	13%
hispanic	41%	41%
other	6%	1%
<b>DRG I</b>	95,998	99,005
asian	2%	2%
black	32%	28%
white	15%	15%
hispanic	48%	51%
other	2%	2%
<b>Statewide</b>	558,377	538,893
asian	4%	5%
black	13%	13%
white	61%	55%
hispanic	20%	24%
other	2%	3%

School-level and state-level data from State Department of Education, EdSight DRG figures are sum of schools for which DRG classification was available.



# Yale Digital Humanities Lab - BlakeTint

*BlakeTint*  
Quantizing Color in William Blake's Illuminated Books

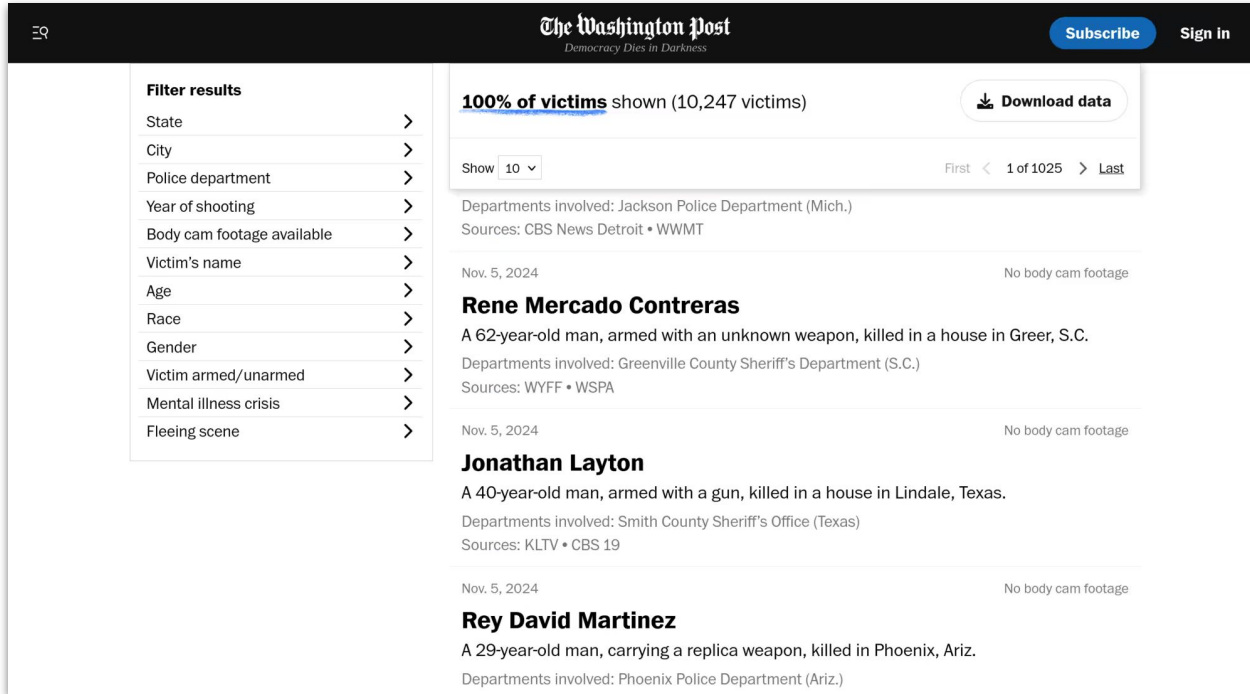
Songs of Innocence Copy X, National Gallery  
View on Blake Archive

Songs of Innocence Copy F, Huntington  
Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens  
View on Blake Archive

Quantize Compare



# Washington Post - Police Shootings database



The screenshot shows the Washington Post Police Shootings database interface. At the top, there is a search icon, the Washington Post logo with the tagline "Democracy Dies in Darkness", and buttons for "Subscribe" and "Sign in".

**Filter results**

- State >
- City >
- Police department >
- Year of shooting >
- Body cam footage available >
- Victim's name >
- Age >
- Race >
- Gender >
- Victim armed/unarmed >
- Mental illness crisis >
- Fleeing scene >

**100% of victims** shown (10,247 victims) [Download data](#)

Show  First < 1 of 1025 > Last

Departments involved: Jackson Police Department (Mich.)  
Sources: CBS News Detroit • WWMT

Nov. 5, 2024 No body cam footage

**Rene Mercado Contreras**  
A 62-year-old man, armed with an unknown weapon, killed in a house in Greer, S.C.  
Departments involved: Greenville County Sheriff's Department (S.C.)  
Sources: WYFF • WSPA

Nov. 5, 2024 No body cam footage

**Jonathan Layton**  
A 40-year-old man, armed with a gun, killed in a house in Lindale, Texas.  
Departments involved: Smith County Sheriff's Office (Texas)  
Sources: KLTW • CBS 19

Nov. 5, 2024 No body cam footage

**Rey David Martinez**  
A 29-year-old man, carrying a replica weapon, killed in Phoenix, Ariz.  
Departments involved: Phoenix Police Department (Ariz.)



# Big Local News - AgendaWatch

**BuzzFeed News** The Coronavirus Is A Media Extinction Event

## CORONAVIRUS

# The Coronavirus Is A Media Extinction Event

"I think there we will unfortunately see more closures of newspapers, more news deserts as a result of this," said one publisher.



**Craig Silverman**  
BuzzFeed News Reporter

Posted on March 23, 2020, at 6:00 p.m. ET



Tweet



Share



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## A challenging time for The Advocate, and for Louisiana

BY PETER KOVACS | Editor and JUDI TERZOTIS | Publisher PUBLISHED MAR 23, 2020 AT 1:49 PM | UPDATED MAR 23, 2020 AT 2:48 PM 1 min





City Council Agenda - President May 26, 2020

**CONSENT AGENDA (2020-141; 2020-147; 2020-177; 2020-210; 2020-212; 2020-229; 2020-252):**

- 2020-0141** ORD Approx \$650,000.00 from General Fund -- General Svcs. Dist (050) Fund Balance to Gen. Control Fund -- Judgments, Claims, & Losses to Prov. Funding for Settlement of Claims of Potential Claims Assured by Temp. Civilian Staff. Employed by City of Jac. Auth. General Counsel to take Further Action to Effectuate Settlements. (B.T. 20-060) (Innocent) (Hire?) (Mayor)  
2/25/20 CO Introduced: F  
3/2/20 F Read 2nd & Referred  
3/10/20 CO PH Read 2nd & Referred: F  
3/17/20 F Meeting Cancelled COVID-19/Emergency-No Action  
3/24/20 CO Meeting Cancelled COVID-19/Emergency-No Action  
3/19/20 F Approve: F  
Public Hearing Pursuant to Chapt 166, F.S. & CR 3.601 -- 3/10/20
- 2020-0147** ORD Closing & Abandoning &/or Disclaiming Portions of Polk Rd., W. 1st St., & W 2nd St. Unopened & Unimproved RW's. Estab. via Doral City Plat. Subj. to Reservation unto City & ISA of Justice Esoterica over Closed Polk Rd. RW to accommodate the City's to maintain existence & provide ADA Ingress & Egress to Powerlines to North. Provide for Apppl. Subject to Conditions (Dist 7-R, Gaffney) (McCam) (Roc of Mayor)  
2/25/20 CO Introduced: TEU  
3/2/20 TEU Read 2nd & Referred  
3/16/20 TEU Meeting Cancelled COVID-19/Emergency-No Action  
3/24/20 CO Meeting Cancelled COVID-19/Emergency-No Action  
4/9/20 TEU Public Hearing Continued Per Ordinance 2020-200  
3/16/20 TEU PH Approve: F  
TEU Public Hearing to Sec 336.10, F.S. --  
3/16/20 46/20 46/20 46/20 46/20  
Public Hearing Pursuant to Chapt 166, F.S. & CR 3.601 -- 3/10/20

# Big Local News - DataTalk



Stanford ENGINEERING Computer Science   THE BROWN INSTITUTE FOR MEDIA INNOVATION

What are the top 10 PACs focused on crypto, ordered by amount of money raised? Include committee ID, name, total receipts, and relevant filing information, like coverage end date and filing frequency.

Intermediate thoughts ^

- Step 1: Understand database structure
- Step 2: Get table details
- Step 3: Building queries
- Step 4: Building queries
- Step 5: Building queries
- Step 6: Get table details
- Step 7: Building queries

Reviewing Final SQL

I attempted to answer your question by the following query

```
sql
SELECT p."CMT_ID", p."name", s."TTL_RECEIPTS", s."CVG_END_DT", m."CMT_FILING_FREQ"
FROM "pac_details" p
JOIN "pac_and_party_summary_2023_2024" s ON p."CMT_ID" = s."CMT_ID"
JOIN "committee_master_2023_2024" m ON p."CMT_ID" = m."CMT_ID"
```

Type your message here...

DataTalk could make mistakes. Consider verifying important claims with other trusted sources.

# Big Local News - get in touch

<https://biglocalnews.org>

[biglocalnews@stanford.edu](mailto:biglocalnews@stanford.edu)



# Exercise 1

1. Write down observations: pain points, inefficiencies, magic wand ideas
2. Big or small, any part of your day
3. Doesn't need to be a tech problem



# Exercise 1: Recap

- How did it go?
- What kind of challenges and opportunities did you surface?



# Problem statements



# Problem statements: The format

[User] needs [need] so that [goal].



# Problem statements: Why?

Shared understanding.

- Who we are solving a problem for
- Separating the need from the solution
- Knowing what done looks like
- Understanding when it's really three smaller problems in a trenchcoat



Problem statements: When to use them?

Always!



## Problem statements: User

- Specific enough that you can picture a real person



# Problem statements: **Need**

- This is the gap
- Not the solution



# Problem statements: Goal

- Why solve this problem at all?



# Problem statements: Examples

- An investigative reporter working across hundreds of court filings **needs** the documents grouped by defendant **so that** she can follow each person's case history without losing the thread every time she opens a new PDF.
- A digital editor publishing a breaking story **needs** to know which of the paper's past articles are most relevant to link **so that** stories have useful context without the editor stopping the publish flow to search the archive.



## Problem statements: Bad

“Health care reporters need better access to information so that they can write better stories.”



(all good problem statements start here)

## Problem statements: Good enough

A local health care reporter on a same-day deadline needs to quickly check whether a source's claim about hospital readmission rates is credible so that she can file on time without repeating a misleading number.



## Problem statements: Good

A general-assignment reporter at an under-resourced local newsroom covering health and other beats with no institutional access to medical literature needs a fast way to establish whether a source's claim about hospital readmission rates falls inside or outside the normal range so that she can file an accurate same-day story on a topic she doesn't cover often enough to have built up reference points of her own.



# Problem statements: Getting from bad to good

- Solutionizing
- User doesn't match goal
- Multi-problem problem
- Use the cheat sheet for more



## Exercise 2: Write a problem statement

- Rough drafts are OK! Everything starts there.
- Try to be specific



## Exercise 2: Recap

- How did it go?
- What kind of challenges and opportunities did you surface?



# Getting more feedback

Using [AI for editorial feedback](#) (ChatGPT, Claude + Local models soon!)



# Where to go from here?

- Start building the habit
- As you're working, stop and think about the problem statement for whatever task you're working on
- Big Local News
- Hacks Hackers Newsroom AI Lab AI tools coming soon!

