



# New York News Publishers Association, Inc.

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ALBANY, NY – The New York News Publishers Association has announced the winners of its 2025 Awards for Excellence competition. The annual contest recognizes journalistic excellence among the association's member newspapers.

Newspapers competed against one another in five circulation classes: Under 10,000; 10,000-24,999; 25,000-49,999; 50,000-75,000 and Over 75,000. Contest judges selected winners from 270 entries submitted by 21 New York State publications.

The journalism judges were:

- **Teresa Buckley**, retired senior editor of the Times Union, Albany
- **Neill Borowski**, retired executive editor of Gannett's Central New York Media Group
- **Barry Rothfeld**, former president and publisher of the Poughkeepsie Journal, managing business development Focus Media, Dutchess County
- **Joel Stashenko**, reporter for the New York Law Journal. Covers state and federal courts, the Legislature, state government and the bar, Albany
- **Toni Milborne**, Managing Editor, The Journal, West Virginia

The advertising judges were:

- **Pam Lego**, Director of Operations, Hoosier State Press Association, Indiana
- **Jeff Weigand**, former Publisher and Chief Revenue Officer, Oswego Media Group, Oswego
- **Jean Harris**, previous NY award winning advertising and marketing professional with over 26 years of newspaper experience, Poughkeepsie
- **Ethan Fogg**, assistant executive director of the Geneva Family YMCA, former regional director of circulation and marketing, Community Media Group, Geneva
- **Bob Schoenbacher**, former president of Newhouse National Sales Co., former President of NY Ad Managers and former president of Albany Ad Cub.

Awards were presented in each of thirty-nine categories:

### 1. Distinguished Breaking News Coverage

Winning entries demonstrate effective newspaper response to deadline demands; and clarity, thoroughness, balance, and aggressiveness in the coverage of local spot news.

### 2. Distinguished Live Sports Coverage

Winning entries demonstrate effective newspaper response to deadline demands as related to live sporting events; and clarity, thoroughness, balance, and aggressiveness in the coverage of local live sports.

Albany—*Times Union*  
Albion—*The Orleans Hub*  
Auburn—*The Citizen*  
Batavia—*The Batavian*  
Batavia—*The Daily News*  
Binghamton—*Press & Sun-Bulletin*  
Brooklyn—*Brooklyn Daily Eagle*  
Buffalo—*The Buffalo News*  
Canandaigua—*The Daily Messenger*  
Cold Spring—*Highlands Current*  
Corning—*The Leader*  
Dunkirk—*The Observer*  
Elmira—*Star-Gazette*  
Geneva—*Finger Lakes Times*  
Glens Falls—*The Post-Star*  
Greenwich Journal/Salem Press  
Herkimer—*The Times Telegram*  
Hornell—*The Evening Tribune*  
Huntington—*HuntingtonNOW*  
Ithaca—*The Ithaca Journal*  
Jamestown—*The Post-Journal*  
Kingston—*Daily Freeman*  
Little Falls—*My Little Falls*  
Lockport—*Union-Sun & Journal*  
Long Island—*Newsday*  
Malone—*The Malone Telegram*  
Massena—*The Advance News*  
Middletown—*The Times Herald-Record*  
New York City—*The New York Post*  
New York City—*The New York Times*  
New York City—*The Wall Street Journal*  
New York City—*City Limits*  
New York City—*NY FOCUS*  
New York City—*The City*  
Niagara Falls—*Niagara Gazette*  
Norwich—*The Evening Sun*  
Olean—*The Times Herald*  
Oneida—*Oneida Daily Dispatch*  
Oswego—*The Palladium Times*  
Plattsburgh—*Press-Republican*  
Poughkeepsie—*Poughkeepsie Journal*  
Ravena—*Ravena News-Herald*  
Red Hook—*The Daily Catch*  
Rochester—*Democrat and Chronicle*  
Rochester—*The Daily Record*  
Rochester—*Rochester Business Journal*  
Salamanca—*Salamanca Press*  
Saranac Lake—*Adirondack Daily Enterprise*  
Saratoga Springs—*The Saratogian*  
Staten Island—*Staten Island Advance*  
Staten Island—*Staten Islander News*  
Syracuse—*The Post-Standard*  
Syracuse—*Central Current*  
Troy—*The Record*  
Utica—*Observer-Dispatch*  
Watertown—*Watertown Daily Times*  
White Plains—*The Journal News*

### **3. Distinguished Investigative Reporting**

Winning entries demonstrate thorough, thoughtful, fair, and resourceful reporting of local stories that reveal corruption or malfeasance or inherent flaws in the functioning of society's institutions; and effectively measure the performance of those institutions against their stated missions.

### **4. Distinguished Business Reporting**

Winning entries demonstrate effective newspaper coverage of business and the economy, skillful investigative reporting and excellence in writing style, editing, display and other pertinent criteria; and deal primarily with how business and economic events relate to individuals and the newspaper's community.

### **5. Distinguished Beat Reporting**

Winning entries demonstrate sustained and knowledgeable coverage of a particular subject or activity of local interest.

### **6. Distinguished Editorial Writing**

Winning entries demonstrate a genuine concern for local community problems; courage in taking a position regardless of the popular view and/or against the newspaper's own self-interest; originality of viewpoint and style; and other pertinent criteria.

### **7. Distinguished Feature Writing**

Winning entries showcase good writing in non-deadline situations, and may include personality profiles, trend stories, narratives and general features; and demonstrate style, originality, and the ability to make readers laugh, cry or feel.

### **8. Distinguished Sports Writing**

Winning entries demonstrate effective coverage of the people, institutions or trends in the local sports community employing thorough, thoughtful, fair, and resourceful reporting as well as quality writing.

### **9. Distinguished Column Writing**

Winning entries demonstrate originality, insight, wit, the capacity to illuminate character, and the capacity to enhance the reader's understanding of persons and events in the community served by the newspaper.

### **10. Distinguished Sports Column Writing**

Winning entries demonstrate originality, insight, wit, the capacity to illuminate character, and the capacity to enhance the reader's understanding of persons and events in local or national sports.

### **11. Distinguished Headline Writing**

Winning entries demonstrate clarity, creativity, and the capacity to distill and capture the essence of the story.

### **12. Distinguished Community Service**

Winning entries demonstrate effort and effect on the part of the local newspaper toward the improvement of the community served, as well as an effort on the newspaper's part to engage the community through both traditional and new media.

### **13. Distinguished State Government Coverage**

Winning entries demonstrate effective newspaper coverage of state government as manifested in service to the community; skillful investigative reporting and excellence in writing style, editing, display, and other pertinent criteria; and deal primarily with an aspect of state government - the legislature, executive branch, a specific state agency, etc. - and how it relates to the community.

### **14. Distinguished Page Design/Presentation**

Winning entries demonstrate strong visual appeal, style and originality; and should enhance the written content, making it easy to understand or navigate.

### **15. Distinguished News Photography**

Winning entries demonstrate news value, timeliness, communicative effectiveness, and skill as shown in composition and technical quality.

### **16. Distinguished Feature Photography**

Winning entries demonstrate imagination in the handling of feature subjects; communicative effectiveness; appeal to reader interest; and skill in composition, technical quality, and cropping.

### **17. Distinguished Sports Photography**

Winning entries sharply capture the drama inherent in human athletic competition and draw the reader's eye to peak action, capturing the moment and communicating it on an emotional level with a high degree of technical skill, composition and quality.

### **18. Distinguished Online Photo Gallery**

Winning entries consist of a series of photographs which appeared on a newspaper's website in a single gallery; and enhance the story to which the gallery is attached, while demonstrating the highest standards of photojournalism.

### **19. Distinguished Online Blog**

Winning entries demonstrate timeliness, originality, insight, reader interaction and the capacity to enhance the reader's understanding of persons and events in the community served by the newspaper.

### **20. Distinguished Multi-Media Presentation**

Winning entries demonstrate work that incorporates distinguished journalistic storytelling via media other than the print format; and may consist of web-based interactive graphics and displays, videos, photo galleries and audio slideshows, or any combination of all these elements.

### **21. Best Newspaper Website**

Open to any member newspaper with an active website. Websites were randomly visited by our judges on multiple occasions. The contest was judged on the following criteria:

- Content - Quality of news and editorial matter
- Navigation - Ease of finding and retrieving information from the website
- Visual/Design - Layout, use of graphics, photographs, animation, color and other visuals
- Advertising - Innovative strategies and/or evidence of revenue generation
- Community - Demonstration that the website fulfills a "community gatekeeper" role *Entries should be submitted as a URL*

### **22. Distinguished News Supplement**

Winning entries demonstrate imaginative layout and design; creative use of headlines; solid, staff-written articles; and high-quality photos relating to a breaking news event; and show knowledge of and connection with the newspaper's community and must contain primarily locally produced content.

### **23. Distinguished Sports Supplement**

Winning entries demonstrate imaginative layout and design; creative use of headlines; solid, staff-written articles; and high-quality photos relating to a local or national sporting event; and show knowledge of and connection with the newspaper's community and must contain primarily locally produced content.

### **24. Distinguished Feature Supplement**

Winning entries demonstrate imaginative layout and design; creative use of headlines; solid, staff-written articles; and high-quality photos relating to a common feature; and show knowledge of and connection with the newspaper's community and must contain primarily locally produced content.

## **Subject Categories - ADVERTISING**

(Note: Print and digital content is eligible for entry in all categories, except in categories 29 & 37, which are intended for print only, and 30, 31 & 35, which are reserved for online-only content)

#### **25. Best Black and White Ad**

Submissions can be any ad size. Submission may include an explanation of why entry is a winning entry.

#### **26. Best Color Ad**

Submissions can be any ad size. Submission may include an explanation of why entry is a winning entry.

#### **27. Most Effective Use of Paid Small Space**

Judges will consider the creativity of copy, along with originality and impact. Ad must be conceptualized and executed solely by the newspaper. All ads must be generated by the newspaper. Ads must be less than a half page.

#### **28. Most Effective Use of Paid Large Space**

Judges will consider the creativity of copy, along with originality and impact. Ad must be

conceptualized and executed solely by the newspaper. All ads must be generated by the newspaper. Ads must be a half page or larger.

29. **Best Special Section Newsprint Distributed In Paper**

Multi-advertiser section involving a single theme. Ad must be produced solely by the newspaper. Judges will consider the uniqueness of idea, content both editorial and ads and overall layout. If an entry runs in multiple newspapers, it must be submitted in a circulation category matching the COMBINED CIRCULATION of those newspapers.

30. **Best Online Ad (Static)**

Ad must be fixed, with no moving parts. All sizes are eligible. Ads must be generated by the newspaper (not camera-ready client produced). Can be paid or a house ad. Creativity and effectiveness of design and message will be criteria for judging.

31. **Best Online Ad (Animated)**

Ad may be .jpg, .gif or Flash. Must have an animated or dynamic element. All sizes are eligible. Ads must be generated by the newspaper (not camera-ready client produced). Can be paid or a house ad. Creativity and effectiveness of design and message will be criteria for judging.

32. **Best Classified Section**

Submit classified page(s) from any one issue during the contest 2022 year. Judged on organization, design, readability, and in-house promotion.

33. **Best House/Newspaper Promotion Ad, Series or Section**

Ad/Series/Section produced by staff to promote an aspect of the newspaper. This may be for circulation, advertising/marketing, editorial or general image/branding. If an entry runs in multiple newspapers, it must be submitted in a circulation category matching the COMBINED CIRCULATION of those newspapers.

34. **Best Multi Advertiser Page**

Multi-advertiser page or pages (not special section – no cover and minimal editorial) involving a single theme: shopping center, seasonal merchandise, specialty stores, holiday, etc. Judges will consider the uniqueness and overall layout. If an entry runs in multiple newspapers, it must be submitted in a circulation category matching the COMBINED CIRCULATION of those newspapers.

35. **Best Use of Video**

Judges will consider creativity, innovation, and impact as well as how effectively the video content delivers the intended message.

36. **Best Custom Sponsored Content Piece**

Entries can be a single article or a series of articles that draw the reader in with commercial sales/promotion. Delivering content that is informative, relevant, and entertaining that it is part of readers' consumption of editorial content.

37. **Best Special Section Non-Newsprint Distributed in Paper**

Any section involving a special subject or theme printed on glossy stock qualifies for this category. Judges will consider the quality of editorial content and graphic design. Special consideration will be given to locally prepared editorial and ad content, as well as particular interest or importance to the community. If an entry runs in multiple newspapers, it must be submitted in a circulation category matching the COMBINED CIRCULATION of those Newspapers.

38. **Best Innovative Idea**

An innovative project or idea initiated by the newspaper's advertising department that resulted in additional revenue for the newspaper. Entries should include a short description of the project or idea, information on revenue generated and the product itself, which may have appeared online, in print or both.

39. **The Charmaine Ushkow Award for Advertising Excellence**

The Charmaine Ushkow Award will be given for the best overall newspaper advertising. The winner of this award will be the newspaper who has accumulated the greatest number of awards among all categories.

**Following is the list of winners:**

<b>The Citizen, Auburn</b>		
<b>Circulation Class</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Winners</b>
Under 10,000	Distinguished Column Writing	Robert Harding
Under 10,000	Distinguished State Government Coverage	Robert Harding
Under 10,000	Distinguished Online Blog	Robert Harding
<b>The Daily News, Batavia</b>		
<b>Circulation Class</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Winners</b>
Under 10,000	Distinguished News Photography	Mark Gutman
Under 10,000	Distinguished Editorial Writing	Ben Beagle
<b>Highlands Current</b>		
<b>Circulation Class</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Winners</b>
Under 10,000	Distinguished Page Design/Presentation	Pierce Strudler
Under 10,000	Distinguished Feature Photography	Ross Corsair
Under 10,000	Distinguished Best Newspaper Website	Staff
Under 10,000	Distinguished Business Reporting	Brian PJ Cronin, Leonard Sparks, Jeff Simms, Joey Asher, Michael Turton
Under 10,000	Distinguished Beat Reporting	Joey Asher
Under 10,000	Distinguished Effective use of Paid Large Space	Pierce Strudler
Under 10,000	Distinguished Special Section Newsprint Distribution in Paper	Pierce Strudler, Lauren Cook
<b>Finger Lakes Times, Geneva</b>		
<b>Circulation Class</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Winners</b>
Under 10,000	Distinguished Live Sports Coverage	Pete Lambos, Spencer Tulis
Under 10,000	Distinguished Sports Column Writing	Spencer Tulis
Under 10,000	Distinguished Headline Writing	Spencer Tulis
Under 10,000	Distinguished Sports Photography	Spencer Tulis
Under 10,000	Distinguished Multi-Media Presentation	Spencer Tulis
Under 10,000	Distinguished Sports Supplement	Pete Lambos, Nick Felice, Spencer Tulis, Alan Brignall, Mike Cutillo, Anne Allis, Mary Beth Thorpe
Under 10,000	Distinguished Feature Supplement	Mike Cutillo, Steve Buchiere, Louise Hoffman Broach, Tahlia Fischer, David Shaw, Spencer Tulis, Pete Lambos, Nick Felice, Anne Allis, Mary Beth Thorpe
Under 10,000	Distinguished Best Black and White Ad	Anne Allis
Under 10,000	Distinguished Best Color Ad	Anne Allis

<b>Finger Lakes Times - continued</b>		
<b>Circulation Class</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Winners</b>
Under 10,000	Distinguished Effective use of Paid Small Space	Anne Allis
Under 10,000	Distinguished Best Online Ad Static	Anne Allis
Under 10,000	Distinguished Best online Ad Animated	Anne Allis
Under 10,000	Distinguished Best Classified Section	Anne Allis
Under 10,000	Distinguished Best House/Newspaper Promotion Ad, Series or Section	Anne Allis
Under 10,000	Distinguished Best Multi Advertiser Page	Anne Allis, Mary Beth Thorpe
Under 10,000	Distinguished Best Custom Sponsored Content Piece	Mary Beth Thorpe
Under 10,000	Distinguished Special Section Non-Newsprint Distribution in Paper	Mary Beth Thorpe, Anne Allis, Tom Ninestine, Alan Brignall, Mike Cutillo
Under 10,000	The Charmaine Ushkow Award for Advertising Excellence	Staff
<b>The Red Hook Daily Catch</b>		
<b>Circulation Class</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Winners</b>
Under 10,000	Distinguished Breaking News Coverage	Emily Sachar
Under 10,000	Distinguished Investigative Reporting	Claire Greenburger, Jack Whitman
Under 10,000	Distinguished Feature Writing	Elena Gastaldo
<b>Star Gazette, Elmira</b>		
<b>Circulation Class</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Winners</b>
Under 10,000	Distinguished Sports Writing	Andrew Legare
<b>Democrat &amp; Chronicle, Rochester</b>		
<b>Circulation Class</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Winners</b>
10,000 – 24,999	Distinguished Sports Writing	Emily Barnes, Tina MacIntyre-Yee
<b>New York Focus, New York</b>		
<b>Circulation Class</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Winners</b>
10,000 – 24,999	Distinguished Investigative Reporting	Ryan Kost, Willow Higgins, Oishika Neogi, Curtis Brodner
10,000 – 24,999	Distinguished Beat Reporting	Jie Jenny Zou
10,000 – 24,999	Distinguished Feature Writing	Chris Gelardi
10,000 – 24,999	Distinguished State Government Coverage	Sammy Sussman

<b>The Journal News, White Plains</b>		
<b>Circulation Class</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Winners</b>
10,000 – 24,999	Distinguished Breaking News Coverage	Nancy Cutler, Seth Harrison
10,000 – 24,999	Distinguished Live Sports Coverage	Mike Dougherty, Stephen Haynes, Frank Becerra Jr., Phil Strum, Ashley Fontones, Maria Birnell, Hartriono B. Sastrowardoyo
10,000 – 24,999	Distinguished Business Reporting	Helu Wang
10,000 – 24,999	Distinguished Sports Column Writing	Mike Dougherty
10,000 – 24,999	Distinguished Community Service	Helu Wang
10,000 – 24,999	Distinguished News Photography	Seth Harrison
10,000 – 24,999	Distinguished Feature Photography	Frank Becerra Jr.
10,000 – 24,999	Distinguished Sports Photography	John Meore
<b>Staten Island Advance</b>		
<b>Circulation Class</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Winners</b>
25,000 – 49,999	Distinguished Breaking News Coverage	Kyle Lawson, Scott Axelrod, Shaina McLawrence, Maura Grunlund, Jan Somma-Hammel, Eddie D'Anna
25,000 – 49,999	Distinguished Investigative Reporting	Erik Bascome, Kyle Lawson, Kristin Dalton
25,000 – 49,999	Distinguished Community Service	Staten Island Advance Staff
25,000 – 49,999	Distinguished News Photography	Owen Reiter
25,000 – 49,999	Distinguished Online Photo Gallery	Owen Reiter
25,000 – 49,999	Distinguished Muti-Media Presentation	Gracelyn Santos, Jason Paderon, Shane DiMaio, Felicia Torres, Kelli DeSantis
25,000 – 49,999	Distinguished Beat Reporting	Pamela Silvestri
	Distinguished Feature Writing	Pamela Silvestri
<b>The Post-Standard, Syracuse</b>		
<b>Circulation Class</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Winners</b>
50,000 – 75,000	Distinguished Live Sports Coverage	Chris Carlson, Javon Edmonds, Brent Axe, Dennis Nett
50,000 – 75,000	Distinguish Investigative Reporting	Michelle Breidenbach
50,000 – 75,000	Distinguished Headline Writing	Charlie Miller
50,000 – 75,000	Distinguished Community Service	Douglass Dowty, N. Scott Trimble
50,000 – 75,000	Distinguished Feature Photography	N. Scott Trimble
50,000 – 75,000	Distinguished Multi-Media Presentation	Michelle Breidenbach, Dennis Nett, N. Scott Trimble
50,000 – 75,000	Distinguished Business Reporting	Glenn Coin
50,000 – 75,000	Distinguished Editorial Writing	Marie Morelli
50,000 – 75,000	Distinguished Feature Writing	Marnie Eisenstadt, Douglass Dowty

Times Union, Albany		
Circulation Class	Category	Winners
50,000 – 75,000	Distinguished Breaking News Coverage	Patrick Tine
50,000 – 75,000	Distinguished Column Writing	Chris Churchill
50,000 – 75,000	Distinguished State Government Coverage	Brendan J. Lyons
50,000 – 75,000	Distinguished News Photography	Will Waldron
50,000 – 75,000	Distinguished Online Photo Gallery	Jim Franco
50,000 – 75,000	Distinguished Feature Supplement	Times Union Staff
50,000 – 75,000	Distinguished News Supplement	Times Union Staff
Newsday, Long Island		
Circulation Class	Category	Winners
75,000 – and over	Distinguished Investigative Reporting	Sandra Peddie, Grant Parpan, Shari Einhorn, Nicole Fuller, Neville Harvey
75,000 – and over	Distinguished Community Service	Newsday Staff
75,000 – and over	Distinguished Page Design Presentation	Issac Lopez
75,000 – and over	Distinguished Multi-Media Presentation	Newsday Staff
75,000 – and over	Distinguished Sports Supplement	Newsday Staff
75,000 – and over	Distinguished Special Section Newsprint Distribution in Paper	Nannette Fevola, James Rosenfeld, Donna Saladino-Schaefer, Marcia Thompson
75,000 – and over	Distinguished Best Custom Sponsored Content Piece	Nannette Fevola, Adrian Debattista, Donna Saladino-Schaefer
75,000 – and over	Best Innovative Idea (Shared via Video Platform for Entrants)	Nannette Fevola, Adrian Debattista, Donna Saladino-Schaefer
Buffalo News		
Circulation Class	Category	Winners
75,000 – and over	Distinguished Sports Writing	Rachel Lenzi
75,000 – and over	Distinguished Sports Column Writing	Mike Harrington
75,000 – and over	Distinguished Sports Photography	Harry Scull Jr.
75,000 – and over	Distinguished Beat Reporting	Francesca Bond
75,000 – and over	Distinguished Most Effective Use of Paid Large Space	Scott Webb
75,000 – and over	Distinguished Best Online Ad (Animated)	Scott Webb
75,000 – and over	Distinguished Best Use of Video	Athan Kompos, Olivia Paolini, Mark Blaszak, Jason Holler
75,000 – and over	Distinguished Best Custom Sponsored Content Piece	Kristy Holfoth, Scott Webb
75,000 – and over	Distinguished Best Special Section Non-Newsprint Distribution in Paper	Kristy Holfoth, Scott Webb, Meggan Emprie