



2017
Awards for Excellence
Competition

Official Rules and Entry Information Booklet

Entry Deadline: March 23, 2018

2017 Awards for Excellence

CONTEST RULES & GUIDELINES

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY AND KEEP THIS BOOKLET
HANDY WHEN SUBMITTING ENTRIES ONLINE!

CONTEST ELIGIBILITY

All member newspapers of the New York News Publishers Association are eligible to enter.

SPONSORSHIP

The contest is sponsored by the New York News Publishers Association.

PURPOSE

The contest is designed to: encourage continuing excellence in newspaper service; suitably reward excellence in various categories of news, editorial, and photographic presentation.

CONTEST DESCRIPTION

First place will be awarded in each of 23 categories in five circulation classes to the NYNPA member newspapers whose entries have demonstrated editorial, creative and/or photographic excellence.

ENTRY FEE (per piece submitted)

1. Under 10,000 circulation: \$15
2. 10,000-24,999 circulation: \$20
3. 25,000-49,999 circulation: \$25
4. 50,000-75,000 circulation: \$30
5. Over 75,000 circulation: \$35

Fees collected are used to defray costs associated with administering the contest. Where the rules of a category require, or present the option of, submitting more than one piece (Ex. Distinguished Community Service), all pieces submitted in that category will count as a single entry. Fees may be paid by mailing a check or paying with credit card via PayPal at www.nynpa.com/awards.html#pay.

CIRCULATION CLASSES

Entries will be placed into one of five circulation classes according to each newspaper's daily 12-month average circulation as reported by our members. Newspapers that publish a Sunday edition as well as a daily edition will be classified according to the average of all editions published by that newspaper. Circulation classes for the 2017 competition are as follows:

1. Under 10,000 circulation
2. 10,000-24,999 circulation
3. 25,000-49,999 circulation
4. 50,000-75,000 circulation
5. Over 75,000 circulation

ENTRIES

Each newspaper is allowed to enter a maximum of four (4) entries per category, and may enter a given entry in any or all of the listed categories for which it qualifies.

In order for an entry to be eligible for this competition, the following criteria must be met:

- The entry must have been originally published either in print or online during the contest eligibility period of January 1 to December 31, 2017, or be part of a series that either began or ended during that period.
- The entry must not have been entered in a previous incarnation of this competition (Ex. the 2016 contest), either individually or as part of a series.
- The entry must meet any additional criteria of a given category as outlined in that category's description.

PRESENTATION

Each newspaper must designate a "Contestant Manager" who will be responsible for managing all entries and adding other "Authorized Entrants" for that paper.

If your paper participated in last year's contest, please use the same Contest Manager password from that contest. (To retrieve lost login information for your Contest Manager click "Forgot password" at login and it will be e-mailed to the Contest Manager on file or contact Margaret McDermott at 518-449-1667 ext. 703 or mmcdermott@nynpa.com.)

If your paper did not participate in last year's contest, the first person who logs in to the contest website from your newspaper should be your paper's Contestant Manager, as he or she will have full control over all entries and adding additional users for your paper. After that person has uploaded two entries he/she will be recognized by the website as the Contestant Manager and asked to verify his/her role via e-mail. Once the Contestant Manager has been verified he/she will be able to add Authorized Entrants who can also upload, edit, and delete entries for your paper.

To get started, your paper's designated Contestant Manager should follow these steps:

1. Log on to www.BetterBNC.com/nynpa2017
2. Click on "Login to this Contest" in the upper right corner of the page
3. Select "Contestant Manager"
4. Select your newspaper under "Media Organization"
5. Enter either your existing password (if registered last year) or the temporary password of "bnc" (if new to the contest).
6. Enter or confirm your information, then submit your entries online as PDFs, JPEGs, URLs, or Microsoft Word documents.

After submitting all entries for the contest online the Contestant Manager must fill out the contest entry form on the back cover of this booklet (also available for download at www.nynpa.com/docs/entryform2017.pdf) and mail it to NYNPA with one check to cover the full amount of all entries being submitted by that newspaper, or with a copy of a payment receipt from PayPal.

ENTRY DEADLINE

All entries must be received no later than **Friday, March 23, 2018 at 5:00 p.m.** No entries will be accepted after the deadline.

ENTRY FEE DEADLINE

Corresponding entry form and accompanying payment (or proof of payment from PayPal) must be received by NYNPA no later than **Friday, March 30, 2018 at 5:00 p.m.**

WINNING ENTRIES

Winners will be notified by mail in May 2018 and invited to attend the annual awards ceremony, scheduled to take place **Wednesday, July 18, 2018 at The Hearts Media Center at the Times Union in Albany, New York. (NEW LOCATION)**

HELPFUL TIPS

- When indicating publication dates for an entry, be sure to enter both the first and last dates a series was published. If the entry was only published one day, select the same date for both the first and last publication dates.
- Avoid submitting a URL leading to general coverage of a topic (Ex. www.yourpaper.com/StateGovernment) or an entire blog (Ex. www.yourpaper.com/PoliticsBlog).
- Do not double-up content by submitting multiple versions of an article or photograph in a single entry (Ex. uploading a PDF of a printed article and also submitting a URL to the same article on the paper's website).
- Make sure you provide a brief explanation of circumstances surrounding your entry in the Comments field for judging. (No special formatting is allowed in this field.)
- If submitting URLs for a website with a paywall, be sure to provide login and password information in the Comments field of an entry for judging.
- Do not include staff titles when listing staff names under credits of an entry.

CONTEST SUPPORT

For questions regarding contest rules or lost login credentials contact:

Margaret McDermott, Advertising & Events Coordinator
New York News Publishers Association
252 Hudson Ave
Albany, New York 12210
(518) 449-1667 ext. 703
mmcdermott@nynpa.com

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

For issues with the contest website please visit betterbncsupport.com or contact:

Cody France
SmallTownPapers, Inc.
217 W. Cota Street
Shelton, WA 98584
(360) 427-6300
cody@smalltownpapers.com

Category Descriptions

CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

(Note: Print and digital content is eligible for entry in all categories, except where noted.)

1. Distinguished Breaking News Coverage

Submissions should demonstrate effective newspaper response to deadline demands. Submissions may consist of a single story or a group of stories by one or more reporters relating to the same event. Submissions should demonstrate clarity, thoroughness, balance, and aggressiveness in the coverage of local spot news.

2. Distinguished Live Sports Coverage

Submissions should demonstrate effective newspaper response to deadline demands as related to live sporting events. Submissions may consist of a single story or a group of stories by one or more reporters relating to the same event. Submissions should demonstrate clarity, thoroughness, balance, and aggressiveness in the coverage of local live sports.

3. Distinguished Investigative Reporting

Submissions should 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/or stories that effectively measure the performance of those institutions against their stated missions. Submissions may consist of a single story or a group of stories by one or more reporters relating to the same event.

4. Distinguished Business Reporting

Submissions should demonstrate effective newspaper coverage of business and the economy, skillful investigative reporting and excellence in writing style, editing, display and other pertinent criteria. The subject matter should deal primarily with how business and economic events relate to individuals and the newspaper's community. In this category, a submission may be one or more articles from the same edition relating to the same story, or a series of articles on a common subject running on different days.

5. Distinguished Beat Reporting

Submissions should demonstrate sustained and knowledgeable coverage of a particular subject or activity of local interest. Submissions should be a series of no more than five reports on the same subject or activity by the same writer.

6. Distinguished Editorial Writing

Submissions should demonstrate a genuine concern for local community problems; courage in taking a position regardless of the popular view and/or against own self-interest; originality of viewpoint and style; and other pertinent criteria. Each submission must be a local editorial. One or more editorials by the same writer on the same subject may be submitted to this category.

7. Distinguished Feature Writing

Submissions should showcase good writing in non-deadline situations. Submissions may include personality profiles, trend stories, narratives and general features. Submissions should demonstrate style, originality and the ability to make readers laugh, cry or feel. Submissions may consist of a single story or a series of stories from one or more editions relating to the same subject.

8. Distinguished Sports Writing

Submissions should 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. Submissions may consist of a single story or a group of stories by one or more reporters relating to the same topic.

9. Distinguished Column Writing

Submissions should 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. Submissions may be a single column or a body of work by the same writer up to a maximum of five columns.

10. Distinguished Sports Column Writing

Submissions should 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. Submissions may be a single body of work by the same writer up to a maximum of five columns.

11. Distinguished Headline Writing

Submissions should demonstrate clarity, creativity, and the capacity to distill and capture the essence of the story. Single submissions only will be accepted in this category.

12. Distinguished Community Service

Submissions (in this category a submission may be a series of articles and/or editorials on a common subject) should 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

Submissions should 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. The subject matter should deal primarily with an aspect of state government - the legislature, executive branch, a specific state agency, etc. - and how it relates to the community. In this category, a submission may be one or more articles from the same edition relating to the same story, or a series of articles on a common subject running on different days.

14. Distinguished Page Design/Presentation

Submissions should demonstrate strong visual appeal, style and originality; and should enhance the written content, making it easy to understand or navigate. Submissions may be a single page or a body of work designed by the same person, up to a maximum of three examples. If submitting a series, up to three days' editions may be included.

15. Distinguished News Photography

Submissions should demonstrate news value, timeliness, communicative effectiveness, and skill as shown in composition and technical quality. A submission may be one or more photographs from one or more editions relating to the same news event.

16. Distinguished Feature Photography

Submissions should demonstrate imagination in the handling of feature subjects; communicative effectiveness; appeal to reader interest; and skill in composition, technical quality, and cropping. A submission may be one or more photographs from one or more editions relating to the same feature subject.

17. Distinguished Sports Photography

Submissions should 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. A submission may be one or more photographs from one or more editions relating to the same subject.

ONLINE CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

(Note: Only content that appeared on a newspaper's website is eligible to be entered in these categories.)

18. Distinguished Online Photo Gallery Submissions should consist of a series of photographs which appeared on a newspaper's website in a single gallery. Submissions should enhance the story to which the gallery is attached, while demonstrating the highest standards of photojournalism.

19. Distinguished Online Blog Submissions should 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. Submissions may be a single day's blog entry or entries, or a series of blog entries over the course of the year by the same writer, with a maximum of ten entries.

20. Distinguished Multi-Media Presentation Submissions should demonstrate work that incorporates distinguished journalistic storytelling via media other than the print format. Submissions may consist of web-based interactive graphics and displays, videos, photo galleries and audio slideshows, or any combination of all of these elements. Creativity, ease-of-use for the website visitor, impact on the community and overall technical execution will be among factors considered by the judges.

SUPPLEMENTAL CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

(Note: Only content that appeared in a newspaper supplement or specialty publication of a newspaper is eligible to be entered in these categories.)

21. Distinguished News Supplement

Submissions should demonstrate imaginative layout and design; creative use of headlines; solid, staff-written articles; and high-quality photos relating to a breaking news event. Submissions should also demonstrate knowledge of and connection with the newspaper's community, and must contain primarily locally-produced content. Submissions may be one example of a regularly-produced weekly supplement, or a one-time supplement or publication.

22. Distinguished Sports Supplement

Submissions should 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. Submissions should also demonstrate knowledge of and connection with the newspaper's community, and must contain primarily locally-produced content. Submissions may be one example of a regularly-produced weekly supplement, or a one-time supplement or publication.

23. Distinguished Feature Supplement

Submissions should demonstrate imaginative layout and design; creative use of headlines; solid, staff-written articles; and high-quality photos relating to a common feature. Submissions should also demonstrate knowledge of and connection with the newspaper's community, and must contain primarily locally-produced content. Submissions may be one example of a regularly-produced weekly supplement, or a one-time supplement or publication.

**New York News Publishers Association
2017 Awards for Excellence**

Official Entry Form

Please read the official contest rules thoroughly before filling out this form. Registration fee or proof of payment via PayPal must accompany this form. **All entries must be received by Friday, March 23. This form and accompanying payment or proof of payment must be received by Friday, March 30, 2018.**

IMPORTANT: Please list only one contact person for your entire newspaper. The contact person listed below should be the same person who registers as the Contestant Manager at www.betterbnc.com/nynpa2017. This person will receive all correspondence relating to our contest.

Contestant Manager Name _____ Title _____

Newspaper _____ Publisher _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number _____ Email Address _____

Circulation Group (based on 12-month average daily circulation - check one):

- _____ 1) Under 10,000 - \$15 per entry
- _____ 2) 10,000-24,999 - \$20 per entry
- _____ 3) 25,000-49,999 - \$25 per entry
- _____ 4) 50,000-75,000 - \$30 per entry
- _____ 5) Over 75,000 - \$35 per entry

Number of Entries _____ Total Amount Enclosed _____

Payment Method (circle one): Check PayPal (pay online at nynpa.com/awards.html#pay)

Mail this form, along with payment (or payment receipt), to:

New York News Publishers Association
2017 Awards for Excellence
252 Hudson Ave
Albany, New York 12210

Need Assistance?

Contact Margaret McDermott at NYNPA:
(518) 449-1667 ext. 703 or mmcdermott@nynpa.com

Contest Information and Updates

Available at www.nynpa.com/awards.html