

SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS

OHIO SPJ AWARDS 2012

(For Work Done in 2011)

CALL FOR ENTRIES

To Honor Ohio's Best Journalism – Print, Broadcast, Online, Trade and College

The Ohio SPJ Awards competition, presented collaboratively by the Cincinnati, Columbus and Cleveland Chapters of SPJ, honors print, broadcast, online, trade and college journalists in Ohio for their best work during 2011 to both serve the public interest and to protect press freedom.

This is the only Ohio competition that honors journalists who fulfill the SPJ mission, defense of the First Amendment, support of literacy, resistance to censorship, advocacy for openness of public records and meetings, media self-criticism and community service. This program also recognizes the best college daily and weekly newspapers, and awards up to \$2,000 in scholarships for excellent college journalistic writing in news, feature, sports and opinion. **Deadline: Entries must be postmarked by March 6, 2012.**

ELIGIBILITY: Journalists are eligible who work for print and broadcast mediums in Ohio, and mediums in adjacent states that have significant reach into Ohio. Entrants need not be members of the Society of Professional Journalists. The work must have been published or broadcast in 2011.

ABOUT SPJ: The Society of Professional Journalists is the nation's most broad-based journalism organization, dedicated to encouraging the free practice of journalism and stimulating high standards of ethical behavior. Founded in 1909 as Sigma Delta Chi, SPJ promotes the free flow of information vital to a well-informed citizenry through the daily work of its nearly 10,000 members; works to inspire current and future journalists through professional development; and advocates for the protection of the First Amendment guarantee of freedom of speech and press.

WHAT SPJ DOES: Nationally, SPJ improves and protects journalism through national and local training, freedom of Information advocacy and resources, its Code of Ethics that encourages responsible reporting, a web site filled with career resources - www.spj.org, and a national recognition program for excellence in journalism. Local SPJ chapters provide programs relevant to a city or region.

PRINT / TRADE PUBLICATION RULES: Prizes will be awarded in two circulation divisions, fewer than 100,000, or 100,000+.

- Unless otherwise specified, entrants must submit a single copy of each article to be judged along with TWO copies of the entry form. Place each entry and the TWO entry forms inside a **separate file or file folder for each entry**. No entries can be returned.
- Originals or photocopies are acceptable for both entries and entry forms.
- A \$30 entry fee must accompany each submission in each category. **SPJ members receive a \$5 discount per entry for their own work.** (One check can be written to cover multiple entries.)

- You may submit an optional statement describing the entry and why it should win.
- You may submit any given article in as many relevant categories as you wish. Submissions from trade publications, newsletters and other print alternatives are welcome.
- This contest is for journalists in the state of Ohio and immediately adjoining states whose publications have significant reach into Ohio.

BROADCAST RULES: NOTE: No market size distinctions. Stations in all Ohio markets, regardless of size, compete against each other.

- Entrants must submit ONE copy of each broadcast to be judged along with TWO copies of the entry form. Place ONE copy of each separate submission and TWO copies of the entry form inside a **separate envelope or file folder. Write the category name on each.** Sorry, no entries can be returned.
- Radio entries must be submitted either on audiocassette or CD; TV entries must be submitted either on 1/2" VHS or DVD.
- A \$30 entry fee must accompany each submission in each category. **SPJ members receive a \$5 discount per entry for their own work.** (One check can be written to cover multiple entries.)
- You may submit an optional statement describing the entry and why it should win. A written transcript should be enclosed, if possible.
- You may submit any given broadcast in as many relevant categories as you wish.
- This contest is for journalists in Ohio and immediately adjoining markets, whose broadcasts have significant reach into Ohio.

COLLEGE STUDENT JOURNALIST RULES: Student material published in student publications or broadcast on student radio or television stations is eligible for **either** college or professional categories, **but not both.**

- Student-produced material that is published in a professional publication or broadcast on a professional radio or television station is only eligible for professional categories.
- Scholarships are awarded only in the college categories.

GENERAL RULES:

- SPJ chapters in other states will conduct judging. All decisions of judges are final.
- By entering, entrants and their employers agree that entries or excerpts may be published in the Ohio SPJ Awards Program Booklet, in future year entry materials, on the websites of Ohio SPJ, or the Cincinnati, Columbus and Cleveland SPJ chapters, or in program publicity.
- Make checks payable to SPJ, and mail with entries to Ohio SPJ Awards, 1331 South High Street, Columbus, OH 43207.
- Online Rules: All URL links and all entry links **must** remain active throughout 2012.
- **Deadline: Entries must be postmarked by March 6, 2012.**
- Entry forms and past winner lists at: www.spjawards.org

PRINT CATEGORIES: (see Rules)

Prizes will be awarded in two circulation divisions, **Large Papers:** 100,000+ circulation, and **Smaller Papers:** fewer than 100,000. Entries must have been published in 2011.

Best Arts Profile - A single story that profiles an individual in sports at the state or local level.

Best Arts Reporting - A pattern of outstanding coverage of arts or entertainment, demonstrated by a selection of at least six news or feature articles by a single writer. The entry may include random stories from the beat, or a combination of stories such as in a series.

Best Business Profile - One story that profiles an individual in business or development at the state or local level.

Best Business Reporting - A pattern of outstanding coverage of business or development, demonstrated by a selection of at least six articles by the writer or team. The entry may include random stories from the beat, or a combination of stories such as in a series.

Best Children's Issues Reporting - One or more stories that serve the needs of children, either by exposing an abuse or exploring solutions to challenges faced by youth.

Best Consumer Reporting - One or more stories that inform readers about a consumer product hazard or exposes questionable behavior in the marketplace.

Best Criminal Justice Reporting - One or more stories on crime or a law enforcement issue, including stories from the courts.

Best Deadline Reporting - Coverage of a disaster (natural or man-made) or other major news event that appears in print within 24 hours of the event occurrence. Judges will look for the best examples of organized team coverage, examine the entire package of words, photos and graphics and consider how the experiences of real people are used to tell the stories.

Best Editorial Page Campaign - An editorial page effort that exposes an inadequacy and leads to change at the state or local level. The entry may include unsigned editorials, signed columns and, if applicable, editorial cartoons and reader responses.

Best Education Issues Reporting: K-12 - Up to six stories demonstrating a pattern of reporting on education issues and schools that aids the public through revealing breaking news, investigative reporting and enterprise stories pertaining to Ohio's public and private schools.

Best Education Issues Reporting: Higher Education - Up to six stories demonstrating a pattern of reporting on higher education issues and institutions that aids the public through revealing breaking news, investigative reporting and enterprise stories pertaining to Ohio's public and private colleges and universities.

Best Environment Reporting - One or more stories that improve the environment, such as by revealing a trouble spot or otherwise spotlighting an environmental topic.

Best Explanatory Journalism - One or more stories that enlighten readers about a public issue or need. Judges will look at the entire package of words, photos and graphics and consider how the experiences of real people are used to tell the stories.

Best Government Reporting - A pattern of outstanding coverage of city, county or state government, demonstrated by a selection of at least six articles by the writer or team. The entry may include random stories from the beat, or a combination of stories such as in a series.

Best Headline Writing - A pattern of outstanding headline writing, demonstrated by a selection of at least six headlines that are creative, concise or otherwise effective in conveying the essence of a story or pulling readers into it.

Best Health Care Reporting - Report or series of reports that demonstrates creativity, originality, depth and clarity in health care reporting.

Best Human Interest Writing - A single human interest feature.

Best Investigative Reporting - Reporting in the public interest, in a single story or series, showing creative use of database reporting and public records laws. Judges will look at the entire package of words, photos and graphics and consider how experiences of real people are used to tell stories.

Best Media Criticism - For reporting, commentary or an academic research paper on a news media controversy or shortcoming.

Best Medical / Science Reporting - One or more stories that enlighten readers about medicine or science.

Best Minority Issues Reporting - One or more stories that best address the issues and challenges faced by a minority group.

Best Newsmaker Profile - One story that profiles an individual local or state newsmaker.

Best Political Commentary - One or more examples of signed commentary that demonstrate outstanding opinion or analysis of state or local candidates or issues.

Best Political Reporting - One or more stories that demonstrate outstanding coverage of state or local candidates or issues.

Best Public Records Use - One or more stories that use Ohio public records law or the federal Freedom of Information Act to uncover information of vital community interest.

Best Public Service Journalism - Best effort by a publication or journalist to connect with the community in a different way, such as by encouraging civic or political engagement or participation.

Best Recession Impact Reporting - An example of outstanding enterprise reporting that describes local impact of the housing crisis, unemployment and the economic recession. Judges will look for stories that tell how real people responded to the challenges of foreclosures and layoffs and how communities helped them cope.

Best Religion Reporting - One or more stories that explore spirituality, address the search for faith in modern life, or examine and illuminate issues and challenges religious communities face.

Best Rock and Roll Commentary - Best example of signed commentary that offers opinion or analysis of rock and roll musicians and trends in the music.

Best Rock and Roll Feature Writing - Best example of feature writing about rock and roll musicians and music. Submit at least four examples of work by a writer or team.

Best Social Justice Reporting - One or more stories on social justice issues, such as poverty, homelessness, substandard housing, public health or social work.

Best Sports Profile - A single story that profiles an individual in sports at the state or local level.

Best Sports Reporting - A pattern of outstanding coverage of sports, demonstrated by a selection of at least six articles by a writer or team. The entry may include random stories from the beat, or a combination of stories such as in a series.

Best Web Site - For the best single web site run by a publication. Provide your web address for judges to access. You may also submit six printouts of page views on different dates. (**NOTE:** Link must remain active throughout 2012.)

BEST OF SHOW (PRINT)

Best Columnist in Ohio - A portfolio of columns by a single writer, including at least six examples.

Best Critic in Ohio - A portfolio of the work of a single critic,

with at least six examples. The work may include reviews of plays, movies, restaurants, or the visual or performing arts

Best Daily Newspaper - Four editions of a daily newspaper. Judges will be looking at reporting, writing, photography, use of graphics and illustrations and overall design quality of all sections of the newspaper.

Best Defense of the First Amendment - For a published story or editorial or legal action pursued by a news organization that battles censorship or gains access to government places or proceedings.

Best Defense of Literacy - A published story or project conducted by the publication that seeks to increase literacy in a community.

Best Graphic Designer in Ohio - A portfolio of six examples of page design and/or art illustration by a single graphic artist. The winner will be asked to provide a compact disk containing electronic copies of the pages for use in the Ohio SPJ Awards program booklet.

Best Monthly - Two issues of a monthly publication that is not a trade publication (see separate category). Judges will be looking for outstanding journalistic effort that is creatively presented.

Best Page One Design - Submit front pages of four editions of the newspaper.

Best Photographer in Ohio - A portfolio of the work of a single photographer, including at least six examples of deadline and non-deadline images. You may submit tear sheets or prints with captions. The winner will be asked to provide a compact disk containing electronic copies of the photos for one-time use in the Ohio SPJ Awards program booklet.

Best Reporter in Ohio - A portfolio of work by a single reporter, including at least six examples. The entry should contain a balance of deadline and non-deadline stories, including feature writing.

Best Special Publication - A freestanding publication, such as a reprint, book or other editorial product with outstanding content and design.

Best Special Section - A single special section or insert published on any topic.

Best Weekly Newspaper - A portfolio of at least six editions of a single weekly newspaper. Judges will be looking for serious journalism that serves the community and is marked by outstanding reporting and effective presentation.

BROADCAST CATEGORIES: (see Rules)

NOTE: No market size distinctions. Stations in all Ohio markets, regardless of size, compete against each other.

Best Consumer Reporting - Report that exposes products or companies performing consumer disservice or which offers consumers news of new products or services. Can be breaking or investigative in nature.

Best Continuing Coverage - Series of reports that demonstrates continued excellence as new information is uncovered on a single news event. Reports may reflect a team effort but must cover a timeline beyond the initial event.

Best Criminal Justice Reporting - Report or series of reports demonstrating excellence in coverage of any facet of law enforcement, from initial field report through the court system.

Best Documentary - Best long-form program appearing outside a regular newscast, covering human interest, sports, entertainment, investigative or any other single topic or event.

Best Education Issues Reporting: K-12 - Up to six stories demonstrating a pattern of reporting on education issues and schools that aids the public through revealing breaking news,

investigative reporting and enterprise stories pertaining to Ohio's public and private schools.

Best Education Issues Reporting: Higher Education - Up to six stories demonstrating a pattern of reporting on higher education issues and institutions that aids the public through revealing breaking news, investigative reporting and enterprise stories pertaining to Ohio's public and private colleges and universities.

Best Enterprise Reporting - Report or series of reports that show initiative and creative individuality in uncovering news other outlets missed.

Best Environmental Reporting - Report or series of reports that demonstrate best coverage of environmental issues, be they of a breaking or investigative nature.

Best Feature Reporting - Report or series of reports that demonstrate creativity in a human interest, non-breaking news event.

Best General Assignment Reporting - Report that demonstrates accuracy, initiative and creativity in a same-day news event.

Best Governmental Reporting - Best report on the business at hand of local or state government. May be a breaking, continuing or investigative story.

Best Health Care Reporting - Report or series of reports that demonstrates creativity, originality, depth and clarity in health care reporting.

Best Investigative Reporting - Reporting that demonstrates in-depth, analytical skills, with information gathered over time. Judges will consider originality, use of public records if they apply, and outcomes of the investigation.

Best Medical / Science Reporting - Report or series of reports that demonstrates best coverage of medical or science issues, be they breaking news or enterprise investigative reports.

Best Minority Issues Coverage - Report, series of reports or long-form public service program which best shows issues facing minorities, be they racial, sexual or religious.

Best Recession Impact Reporting - An example of outstanding enterprise reporting that describes local impact of the housing crisis, unemployment and the economic recession. Judges will look for stories that tell how real people responded to the challenges of foreclosures and layoffs and how communities helped them cope.

Best Sports Profile - A single story that profiles an individual in sports at the state or local level.

Best Sports Reporting - A pattern of outstanding coverage of sports, demonstrated by a selection of at least six articles by a writer or team. The entry may include random stories from the beat, or a combination of stories such as in a series.

Best Spot News - Single or series of reports that best exemplify breaking coverage on a story that's developing as it airs or that airs under deadline within hours of the event.

Best Web Site - Best site run by each medium, one for television stations, one for radio stations. Submit web address for judges to view live. (**NOTE:** Link must remain active throughout 2012.)

INDIVIDUAL / STATION HONORS:

Best Anchor - Best examples of an anchor's on-air work demonstrating excellence in delivery, authority and poise. Tapes should be no longer than 15 minutes, and should include samples from more than one newscast. Judges will look at the anchor's delivery and writing style, ease of comprehension by listeners or viewers, and story selection.

Best Editor - Best use of video and/or sound in editing a quality story or program. Entrant may have gathered own video/sound or may have edited material gathered by others.

Best Newscast - Best daily newscast. Submit entire program minus commercial breaks.

Best News Operation - Best overall news department to demonstrate excellence in all facets of operation. Submit compilation of newscasts, special reports and any other programming. Tape should be limited to 30 minutes.

Best Producer - Best example of a single program to include writing, story selection and technical merit. Submit entire program minus commercial breaks. May include newscast or special program.

Best Public Affairs Program - Best public affairs program. Submit entire program minus commercials.

Best Reporter - Best reporter to demonstrate excellence in live (field or studio) and taped segments that show versatility, dependability and creativity. Stories may include deadline and non-deadline reporting. Judges will consider general assignment and specialty reporters.

Best Videographer - Best visual storyteller who demonstrates excellence in videography and use of sound, be it in spot news, general assignment or specialty reporting. Judges will credit versatility in multiple platforms.

ONLINE CATEGORIES: (see Rules)

(NOTE: Link must remain active throughout 2012.)

Best Arts/Entertainment Story - For the best coverage (story or single series) of an arts/entertainment topic. Judges will look at quality of writing, creativity and overall presentation.

Best Business/Tech Story - For the best coverage of a business or technology topic. Judges will look at quality of writing, sourcing and overall presentation.

Best Editorial Writing - For the single most persuasive editorial that addresses an inadequacy or takes a position on a state or local level issue.

Best Feature - For the best feature story or series. Judges will look at quality of writing, creativity and overall presentation.

Best Graphic Design / Navigation - For the best design and/or art illustration, ease of navigation and quality of links.

Best Headline Writing - For the best single headline or series of headlines. Judges will look for reader appeal, impact and/or humor. Submit printouts only of best web page headlines.

Best Medical / Science Story - For the best coverage of a medical or science topic. Judges will look at quality of writing, sourcing and overall presentation.

Best News Story - For the best story or series reflecting hard news of the day. Judges will look at quality of writing, sourcing and overall presentation.

Best Photography - For the best black-white and/or color photography online. Judges will look at technical composition, creativity and overall visual impact. Submit URLs OR printouts of up to three web pages of best photography.

Best Sports Coverage - For the best sports reporting (story or single series). Judges will look at quality of writing, sourcing and overall presentation.

Best Blog - Blogs are defined as web pages of commentary or opinion. For the best single overall Blog. Entries will be judged on quality of writing. Submit your URL(s) OR submit printouts of six web pages of your blog that are representative.

BEST OF SHOW (ONLINE)

Best General News Site - For the best overall website. Sites will be judged on news content, design and navigation. Submit your URL(s) OR submit printouts of six web pages of your site that are representative.

TRADE PUBLICATION CATEGORIES: (see Rules)

Best Cover Design - Submit original, color copies of a coverage page.

Best Department - For the best example of creativity that keeps sections fresh and informative. Submit three consecutive examples.

Best Feature Design - Submit originals or very clean photocopies.

Best General Story - For the best single story (travel, entertainment, lifestyle, etc.).

Best Personality Profile - For the best single personality profile published.

Best Trade Publication Web Site - For the best example of a web site posted by a trade publication. Submit URL or three screen views showing the range of work. (NOTE: Link must remain active throughout 2012.)

Best Trade Report - A story or series on a topic, issue or trend affecting the publication's target audience. You may include a brief description of any action or change that resulted from the coverage.

BEST OF SHOW (TRADE PUBLICATIONS)

Best Trade Columnist in Ohio - For the best selection of columns. Submit at least two consecutive examples. The column must appear regularly.

Best Trade Publication in Ohio - For the best overall performance of an entire staff. Submit two complete issues. Entries will be judged on reporting, editing, writing, photography, design, graphics, packaging and other criteria deemed appropriate by the judges.

COLLEGE JOURNALISM CATEGORIES: (see Rules)

Best College Daily Newspaper - For the best student newspaper or publication published regularly 3 or more times a week. Enter three issues. NO ENTRY FEE.

Best College Non-daily Newspaper - For the best student newspaper or publication published regularly up to twice a week. Enter three issues. NO ENTRY FEE.

Best College News Writing - One \$500 scholarship will be awarded to the college journalist who shows the most promise as a news writer, print or broadcast, through published or aired stories and academic standing. Ohio students only. Student entry fee: \$10. Submit two or more stories, a recommendation from an advisor/teacher, and a grade report.

Best College Feature Writing - One \$500 scholarship will be awarded to the college journalist who shows the most promise as a feature writer, print or broadcast, through published or aired stories and academic standing. Ohio students only. Student entry fee: \$10. Submit two or more stories, a recommendation from an advisor/teacher, and a grade report.

Best College Sports Writing - One \$500 scholarship will be awarded to the college journalist who shows the most promise as a sports writer, print or broadcast, through published or aired stories and academic standing. Ohio students only. Student entry fee: \$10. Submit two or more stories, a recommendation from an advisor/teacher, and a grade report.

Best College Opinion Writing - One \$500 scholarship will be awarded to the college journalist who shows the most promise as an opinion writer, print or broadcast, through published or aired opinion pieces and academic standing. Ohio students only. Student entry fee: \$10. Submit two or more stories, a recommendation from an advisor/teacher, and a grade report.

**Entry forms and past winner lists at:
www.spjwards.org**