



To: High school newspaper, yearbook, broadcasting and other media advisers

Re: WKU HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA AWARDS

High school journalists play an important role in their communities. From developing important skills to tackling controversial issues, the annual WKU High School Media Awards recognize budding journalists for their talent and hard work.

The 2023 WKU High School Media Awards sponsored by the Western Kentucky University School of Media and WKU Student Publications, reward the outstanding efforts of high school journalists throughout the region. We urge high school newspaper, broadcasting and yearbook advisers to enter their staffers in one or more categories described in the enclosed material.

Winners will be announced during an awards ceremony at WKU on March 24. The ceremony will be part of Media Scholars Day, a one-day conference with multiple breakout sessions for students to develop skills and knowledge relevant to their media outlets. More details about Media Scholars Day will be announced in January.

All entries must be submitted online. This will save your school on postage and eliminate delays in mail handling. All forms can be accessed at www.wku.edu/khsmi/contests. The exception to that is "overall" yearbook categories which require a book to be sent in for judging. All yearbooks must be postmarked by the contest deadline of Feb. 17 and received at WKU no later than Feb. 22.

Entries must be submitted online by 11:59 p.m. on Friday, February 17.

Please read the enclosed rules carefully; any entries not received by the deadline, or that do not meet the requirements will be disqualified without notice. You will receive an email confirmation when your entry has been successfully submitted.

If you have any questions please email me at samual.oldenburg@wku.edu or call me at 270-745-3055. Please note, WKU is closed for winter break from Dec. 17 through Jan. 2, and I will respond to any questions received during that time once I return to the office in January.

Good Luck!

Sam Oldenburg
Kentucky High School Media Institute Coordinator
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The Spirit Makes the Master

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2023 Contest Categories

Newspaper/Magazine (print or online)

- N1. Best news story
- N2. Best feature story
- N3. Best editorial
- N4. Best review or column
- N5. Best sports story
- N6. Best news/feature photography
- N7. Best sports photography
- N8. Best editorial cartoon
- N9. Best front page design
- N10. Best page design, inside page/spread
- N11. Best multimedia production
- N12. Best high school news publication
- N13. Best high school news website
- N14. Most valuable newspaper/magazine staff member

Broadcasting

- B1. Best news story
- B2. Best sports story
- B3. Best feature story
- B4. Best news videography
- B5. Best music video
- B6. Best narrative film
- B7. Best high school broadcast/newscast
- B8. Most valuable broadcast staff member

Yearbook

- Y1. Sports spread
- Y2. Student life spread
- Y3. Academic spread
- Y4. Organizations spread
- Y5. Division page spread
- Y6. Candid feature photo
- Y7. Sports action photo
- Y8. Feature story
- Y9. Cover design
- Y10. Overall layout/design
- Y11. Theme development
- Y12. Advertising
- Y13. Best overall yearbook
- Y14. Most valuable yearbook staff member

General contest rules

- Entries must have been published or aired during the 2022 – 2023 school year or during the spring semester of 2022. Unpublished work is not eligible.
- Only student-produced work is eligible for entry.
- Each school may submit only one entry per category.
- At least three entries must be received in each category for judging to take place.
- All decisions are final, and entries that do not meet requirements will be disqualified.
- Yearbooks will not be sent back to schools but can be picked up at the awards ceremony.

Category specific rules

Categories N1 – N5

- Submit one piece of writing per category.

- Entry should be submitted as a PDF file (maximum size 10 MB) showing the story as it was originally published on the page or a URL link if the piece was originally published online.
- The piece may be written by one student or multiple students, but only one entry per category will be accepted from each school.

Categories N6 – N7

- Submit one photograph per category.
- Photographs must have been published during the time period above. Unpublished work is not eligible for entry.
- Entry should be submitted as a JPEG file (maximum size 10 MB).
- Captions should be included in the appropriate field on the entry form.

Category N8

- Submit one editorial cartoon.
- Entry should be submitted as a PDF file (maximum size 10 MB) showing the editorial cartoon as it was originally published on the page or a URL link if the piece was originally published online.

Category N9

- Submit one front page design as it was printed.
- Entry should be submitted as a PDF (maximum size 10 MB).

Category N10

- Submit one page or spread (2 pages side by side) other than a front page.
- Entry should be submitted as a PDF (maximum size 10 MB).

Category N11

- Multimedia refers to a combination of different content forms used to tell a story. A production that meets the judging criteria should include a combination of text, audio, still images, animation, video and/or interactivity.
- Submit one URL link to the page where the multimedia production can be viewed.

Category N12

- Submit one complete issue of the publication as it was presented to the student body.
- Entry should be submitted as one PDF file (maximum size 25 MB) combining all pages of the publication.
- Publications published as an online PDF but not printed are also eligible

Category N13

- A news website refers to a website with the primary purpose of reporting news and events.
- Websites will be judged based on overall presentation and content.
- The entry must include the URL to the site homepage as well as three URLs for individual pieces published during the time period above.

Category B1

- Reports must have a hard news focus, regardless of subject.
- Entries must be based on coverage of breaking or developing news stories related to campus, community, national or international issues, sports, business, investigative, science, weather or other current newsworthy matters.
- Submit a URL link to where the piece can be viewed online.

Category B2

- Submit a story about a sports topic. Subject may include, but are not limited to, breaking news or features.
- Entry may not exceed four minutes.
- Play by play of a sporting event is not eligible.
- Submit a URL link to where the piece can be viewed online.

Category B3

- Entries must be non-deadline reporting of personalities, events or issues.
- Submit a URL link to where the piece can be viewed online.

Category B4

- Submit a URL link to where the piece can be viewed online.
- News videography will be judged on the following criteria:
 - Lighting (dark, light, white balance)
 - Shot sequence (establisher, medium-close-up; 180-degree rule)
 - Shot steadiness (shaky; pans and zooms)
 - Video editing, flash frames/jump-cuts; use of outsource video; edits in camera movement shots (editing while in pan or zoom mode)
 - Referencing in narrative (if applicable in a package); video matching reporter

- Audio-NAT sound (clarity, good background use of music/sound-effects)
- Use of sound-bites (if applicable for photo essay's or packages)
- Overall impact; compelling/boring video has conclusion; precise/vague message

Category B5

- Submit a URL link to where the piece can be viewed online.
- The music video category will be judged on the following criteria:
 - Is the music original (if so, quality of the recording)
 - How well does it convey the intent of the music/lyrics.
 - Concept originality
 - Production value: shooting, lighting, use of color (visual aesthetic, camera craft, effective composition)
 - Post production: editing, special effects, integration of sound & picture (cutting to the music, or in a way that enhances the music)
 - Entertainment level for the viewer (storytelling? cohesive theme?)

Category B6

- The Narrative Short Film category encompasses all works of scripted, fictitious cinema, and must be no longer than five minutes. Unlike documentaries or news packages, narrative works are not a direct recording of genuine, unstaged events.
- Entry may not exceed five minutes.
- Submit a URL link to where the piece can be viewed online.

Category B7

- Entries in the category will be judged on the overall work of a staff or team.
- One complete broadcast must be submitted just as it was aired to the student body or the public.
- Provide airdate, method of telecast, and audience
- Newscasts will be judged on the following:
 - Lead story selection
 - Based on lead story, story “flow” to end of first block
 - Based on first story in “B” block, “pace” to the end of second block
 - Story writing (including grammar and spelling)
 - Tease and bump writing
 - Use of graphics (including written content; size)
 - Anchor positioning

Most Valuable Staffer Categories (N14, B8, Y14)

- Submit three to five examples of the entrant's work as PDFs or URL links.
- The entrant must be a 2023 graduating senior.
- The application must include a nomination letter from the media adviser.