



Wisconsin **College** Media Association

# **Better Newspaper Contest**

## **Rules & Categories**

# Contest Categories

- |                                      |                                  |                         |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. General Excellence                | 8. Sports Story                  | 15. Infographic         |
| 2. Collegiate Journalist of the Year | 9. Editorial Writing             | 16. Page Design         |
| 3. Breaking News Reporting           | 10. Column Writing               | 17. Use of Multimedia   |
| 4. Public Affairs Reporting          | 11. Freedom of Information Award | 18. Website             |
| 5. In-Depth Story                    | 12. News Photography             | 19. Advertisement       |
| 6. Feature Story                     | 13. Feature Photography          | 20. Newspaper Promotion |
| 7. Arts and Entertainment Story      | 14. Sports Photography           |                         |

## Rules & Information

### **Contest Deadline: Monday, Jan. 21, 2019**

- All entries must be uploaded by 10:59 p.m.
- Mailed entries must be postmarked by this date.

### **Contest Period: Sept. 1, 2017 - Dec. 31, 2018**

All print and digital entries must have been published during the entry period.

### **Entry Divisions**

- Division A: published weekly or daily OR undergraduate enrollment of 7,500 or more
- Division B: published monthly or bi-monthly OR undergraduate enrollment of 7,500 or less

*Entries will be merged into the next highest circulation category automatically if a category received three or fewer entries.*

### **Eligibility**

All active campus newspapers covering Wisconsin public and private college and university campuses are eligible.

### **Number of entries allowed**

Unless otherwise specified, each entrant may submit as many entries in each contest as desired.

### **Contest Website and Contest Managers**

Entries can be submitted online at [www.betternewspapercontest.com/WCMA](http://www.betternewspapercontest.com/WCMA). Each newspaper will be assigned a contest manager, who will receive a username and password. The contest manager can add authorized entrants, who may also submit entries. The contest manager can also opt to share his or her login information with staffers so that they may upload their entries. *If you've forgotten your username or password*, contact Membership & Programming Specialist Jordan Schelling at [jordan.schelling@wnanews.com](mailto:jordan.schelling@wnanews.com).

## Online entry

All entries must be completed online through the contest website [www.betternewspapercontest.com/WCMA](http://www.betternewspapercontest.com/WCMA). Detailed instructions can be viewed on the website. Full page electronic tear sheets must be submitted with each entry, with the exception of digital categories. If you don't have access to a PDF of your entry, please contact Media Services Director Denise Guttery at [Denise.Guttery@wnanews.com](mailto:Denise.Guttery@wnanews.com) for login credentials to your WNA-hosted electronic archive.

## Mailed Entries

The General Excellence category allows for hard-copy submissions. **You still must first submit information about the entry online**, submit an electronic tear sheet for the first page, print and affix your entry label to the front of each mailed entry.

Mailed entries and payment must be postmarked by Jan. 21, 2019, and sent to:

Attn: Jordan Schelling  
WCMA Better Newspaper Contest  
34 Schroeder Ct., Suite 220  
Madison, WI 53711

## Payment

There is a \$7.50 entry fee for each entry. Please send a check with any mail-in entries or complete credit card payment on or before the contest deadline. Make checks payable to the *Wisconsin Newspaper Association Foundation*.

## Judging

Experienced newspaper professionals from the Washington Newspaper Publishers Association will be selected as judges.

## Presentation of Awards

Awards will be presented at the annual WCMA Convention on Friday, March 8, 2019, at The Madison Concourse Hotel in downtown Madison.

## John Patrick Hunter First Amendment Contest

The Society of Professional Journalists-Madison Chapter established the John Patrick Hunter First Amendment Contest three years ago in honor of John Patrick Hunter, a former reporter for *The Capital Times* in Madison. The award recognizes the publication of materials intended to promote knowledge of the First Amendment. Two first place winners will be awarded — one for news writing and one for editorial writing. Entries must have been printed between Sept. 1, 2017 and Dec. 31, 2018. Each winner will receive a \$125 cash prize at the annual WCMA Convention on Friday, March 8, 2019, at The Madison Concourse Hotel in downtown Madison.

# Category Descriptions

## **1. General Excellence**

This is the top award in the WCMA Better Newspaper Contest. Entries will be judged on overall evaluation of the newspaper, with maximum point value assigned as follows:

- Depth, breadth and quality of news coverage: 25 points
- Quality of writing and editing: 15 points
- Design/layout: 15 points
- Photography/artwork: 15 points
- Editorial page quality: 10 points
- Sports coverage: 10 points
- Lifestyle coverage: 10 points

**Submit:** Three (3) complete issues of the newspaper must be submitted as PDFs or via mail.

Entrants must select one issue from the month of October 2017, one from the month of February 2018 and another from a month of their choosing. Entries are limited to one per newspaper. PDFs of each issue's front page should also be uploaded using the online contest portal.

## **2. Collegiate Journalist of the Year**

This competition is open to any collegiate print or online journalist in Wisconsin. Criteria include the quality of the journalist's published work and their journalistic contributions to their campus, community and student newspaper. Nomination shall be made by the student's editor or adviser and shall consist of a letter outlining the nominee's contributions to journalism and samples of their work.

**Submit:** Upload nomination letter as a PDF. Enter work samples as full-page PDFs and/or URLs.

## **3. Breaking News Reporting**

This award recognizes excellence in breaking news coverage, both in print and online. Entrants may submit online coverage from a 48-hour period surrounding the news event, as well as the edition of the newspaper printed in closest proximity to the event (the next printed edition). Criteria include enterprise, thoroughness, objectivity, local importance, clarity and style. A newspaper may submit an unlimited number of entries, but a staff member's name may not appear on more than two entries.

**Submit:** Upload full-page PDF(s) and/or submit URL(s) for the online coverage from a 48-hour period surrounding the event and/or coverage that appeared in the subsequent print edition.

## **4. Public Affairs Reporting**

This award recognizes excellence in public affairs reporting, including coverage of student, local, state or federal government and how it affects the newspaper's community. Criteria include enterprise, clarity and relevancy. Editorials or columns may be submitted as supporting materials, but cannot be the main focus of the entry. A newspaper may submit an unlimited number of

entries, but a staff member's name may not appear on more than two entries.

**Submit:** Upload full-page PDF(s) or submit URL(s) for story or story and sidebar(s).

### **5. In-Depth Story**

This award recognizes the best single story or series on a single topic that goes beyond the surface and requires more time, work and professional skill than general news reporting. Criteria include enterprise, relevancy, resourcefulness, originality, organization, clarity, use of sources and impact. Each entry shall consist of either a single story or a series on a particular topic. A newspaper may submit an unlimited number of entries, but a staff member's name may not appear on more than two entries.

**Submit:** Upload full-page PDF(s) or submit URL(s) for story or stories.

### **6. Feature Story**

Each entry shall consist of a single feature article or feature article and sidebar(s). Criteria include effectiveness of writing style, originality of approach and human interest. A newspaper may submit an unlimited number of entries, but a staff member's name may not appear on more than two entries.

**Submit:** Upload full-page PDF(s) or submit URL(s) for story or story and sidebar(s).

### **7. Arts and Entertainment Story**

Each entry shall consist of a single arts and entertainment article or article and sidebar(s). Criteria include effectiveness of writing style, originality of approach and human interest. Entries may include, but are not limited to, profiles on artists or entertainers or coverage of an entertainment event. Entries shall not include reviews (these should be entered in Category 10 - Column Writing). A newspaper may submit an unlimited number of entries, but a staff member's name may not appear on more than two entries.

**Submit:** Upload full-page PDF(s) or submit URL(s) for story or story and sidebar(s).

### **8. Sports Story**

Each entry shall consist of a single sports story, series or story and sidebar(s) on the same topic. Criteria include significance of subject, writing quality and thoroughness. A newspaper may submit an unlimited number of entries, but a staff member's name may not appear on more than two entries.

**Submit:** Upload full-page PDF(s) or submit URL(s) for each story.

### **9. Editorial Writing**

Each entry shall consist of a single editorial. Criteria include quality of writing, significance to the school, importance of the issue, success of the argument on the reader and general impact. A newspaper may submit an unlimited number of entries, but a staff member's name may not appear on more than two entries.

**Submit:** Upload full-page PDF or submit URL for the editorial.

## 10. Column Writing

Each entry shall consist of a single column, and may be a news, feature or humor column. Criteria include reader appeal, depth of material or research and clarity of writing. Newspapers may submit an unlimited number of entries, but no more than two for the same columnist.

**Submit:** Upload full-page PDF or submit URL for the column.

## 11. Freedom of Information Award

This award recognizes the efforts of student journalists to further the cause of freedom of information by best conveying an appreciation and commitment to the First Amendment, freedom of speech and freedom of the press. Entries may include editorials, news coverage, or community education based on information gathered through open meetings and/or public records—or a combination of these examples. Entrants may also submit a written description of how the reporter(s) and/or newspaper has exemplified or defended freedom of information principals. A newspaper may submit an unlimited number of entries, but a staff member's name may not appear on more than two entries.

**Submit:** Upload full-page PDF(s) or submit URL(s) for story or stories. If including a letter of explanation, upload as a PDF.

## 12. News Photography

Each entry shall consist of a single photo (or up to three photos on the same subject) that is the direct result of a news event. Criteria include news value, enterprise, impact, composition, technical ability and originality. Photographers may submit unlimited entries.

**Submit:** Upload full-page PDF(s) or submit URL(s) and the individual JPG(s) for each photo.

## 13. Feature Photography

Each entry shall consist of a single photo (or up to three photos on the same subject) with human interest qualities. Criteria include creativity, impact, interest, composition, technical ability and originality. Photographers may submit unlimited entries.

**Submit:** Upload full-page PDF(s) or submit URL(s) and the individual JPG(s) for each photo.

## 14. Sports Photography

Each entry shall consist of a single photo (or up to three photos on the same subject) focusing on any aspect of athletics. Criteria include creativity, impact, interest, composition, technical ability and originality. Photographers may submit unlimited entries.

**Submit:** Upload full-page PDF(s) or submit URL(s) and the individual JPG(s) for each photo.

## 15. Infographic

Each entry shall consist of a single graphic or graphic package that helps to deepen the reader's understanding of a topic via visual elements. Entries may include graphs, charts, maps or other graphics used to convey information in a succinct manner. Criteria include creativity, effectiveness, clarity, accuracy and originality. Designers may submit unlimited entries.

**Submit:** Upload full-page PDF(s) or submit URL(s) for the graphic and the accompanying story.

## 16. Page Design

This award recognizes excellence in newspaper page design. Each entry shall consist of a single page of the entrant's choosing. Criteria include creativity, originality, headline treatment, use of visual elements and white space, clarity and reader appeal. Designers may submit unlimited entries.

**Submit:** Upload full-page PDF(s) of the newspaper page.

## 17. Use of Multimedia

This award recognizes excellence in storytelling using multimedia elements. Entries may include, but are not limited to videos, podcasts, photo slideshows and interactive graphics. Entries may be part of a project that also includes a print or online story or standalone pieces. Criteria include innovation, technical quality, impact and effectiveness of storytelling. Newspapers may submit unlimited entries.

**Submit:** Submit URL(s) for multimedia elements. If part of a larger project, submit PDF or URL for accompanying story. Third party platforms, like Storify or Pearltrees, may be used to showcase digital projects.

## 18. Website

This award recognizes the best news website created by a college newspaper in Wisconsin. Entries are evaluated for quality of news and editorial content, ease of navigation, layout, use of visual elements, innovative advertising and revenue-producing strategies and the demonstration that the website fulfills a community role. Entrants are encouraged to include a letter of explanation regarding how staff utilizes the site to share news and engage with readers. Entries are limited to one per newspaper.

**Submit:** Submit website's URL. If including a letter of explanation, upload as a PDF.

## 19. Advertisement

This award recognizes overall excellence of the best staff-produced college newspaper ad, awarded to the individual who conceived and developed the idea. Criteria include originality, design, advertising idea and advertising copy. Newspapers may submit unlimited entries.

**Submit:** Upload a PDF of the full page on which the ad ran or a URL for an online ad.

## 20. Newspaper Promotion

This award recognizes efforts on behalf of a student newspaper to engage its community, including the campus, advertisers and the general public, in order to promote the publication and/or drive revenue. Entries may include, but are not limited to, print or online house ads, publications, projects, event materials, rate cards, survey information or other promotional materials. Entries must be accompanied by a letter to the judges explaining the concept, purpose and results. Newspapers may submit unlimited entries.

**Submit:** Upload full-page PDF(s) and/or submit URL(S). Letter of explanation must be a PDF file.