

2025 ALL-OHIO EXCELLENCE IN JOURNALISM AWARDS

Presented by the Press Club of Cleveland

June 6, 2025

WRITING

ANALYSIS

1st place

“How Springfield rumor spread from right-wing social media to the presidential debate”

Dan Horn and Victoria Moorwood

The Cincinnati Enquirer

Judges’ comments: A precise and necessary timeline and analysis of how one social media post about a neighborhood rumor went viral the world over and became a flashpoint in the U.S. Presidential race.

2nd place

“US Media and Factcheckers Fail to Note Israel’s Refutation of ‘Beheaded Babies’ Stories”

David Knox

Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting (www.fair.org)

Judges’ comments: A careful analysis that fact checks the fact checkers.

3rd place

“EUDR: A ‘gargantuan’ task”

Sam Cottrill

Rubber News

ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

Overall category judges’ comments: This was a hard category to judge! The stories were engaging and interesting, each in its own way.

1st place

“Vintage Vivacity”

Katy Smith

Columbus Monthly

2nd place

“Downtown Cincinnati library reopens after \$43.4M renovation”

Sydney Franklin

The Cincinnati Enquirer

3rd place

“Courtroom restoration reveals museum-quality artwork and a few well-kept secrets”

Alan Miller

TheReportingProject.org

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

1st place

“Canton Symphony fights for survival”

Ed Balint

The Repository

Judges' comments: The writing is engaging right from the start. There's also some serious reporting in this story. It's rare arts and entertainment stories read like real news. This piece rises to the occasion.

2nd place

"Christopher Fiorello is walking 3,800 miles to get 'Closer to Home' "

Emily Votaw

WOUB Public Media

Judges' comments: The writing in this piece is everything. A wonderful narrative style!

3rd place

"The Day the Music Died"

Dan Williamson

Columbus Monthly

Judges' comments: Some good reporting.

BREAKING NEWS**1st place**

"Mass shooting coverage"

Anthony Thompson Thompson, Bryce Buyakie

Akron Beacon Journal

Judges' comments: Great to have breaking news/coverage like this center on a family or the victim of a family.

2nd place

"Florence mass shooting"

Aaron Valdez, Killian Baarlaer and Bebe Hodges

The Cincinnati Enquirer

3rd place

"Lorain County Prosecutor J.D. Tomlinson, Chief of Staff Jim Burge charged with felony intimidation"

Owen MacMillan

The Chronicle-Telegram

BUSINESS & FINANCIAL

Overall category judges' comments: Great articles overall. Was especially impressed by the insights in the NHL article and the research work on the CEO article.

1st place

"Why does your burger cost \$20?"

Dan Eaton

Columbus Business First

Judges' comments: Highly relatable topic that immediately engages the reader. The breakdown of menu item costs was particularly interesting.

2nd place

"Stale, Male and Pale' No More"

Steve Watkins

Cincinnati Business Courier

Judges' comments: Strongly researched article with compelling data and insightful analysis.

3rd place

“Workers fret as Kroger-Albertsons merger battle rages”

Alexander Coolidge

The Cincinnati Enquirer

Judges’ comments: A successful blend of context and a strong focus on individuals.

COLUMN OR BLOG: GENERAL NEWS

1st place

“Sunlite pool”

Kevin Aldridge

The Cincinnati Enquirer

2nd place

“The courage to face a bad man”

Rini Jeffers

The Chronicle-Telegram

3rd place

“Newly naturalized citizen faces unexpected hurdles voting for the first time”

Allisson Toro-Lagos

Akron Beacon Journal

COLUMN OR BLOG: SPORTS

Overall category judges’ comments: This was a class field, full of professional writing that made the judging a joy, and a chore, all at once. Someone had to win, and the entries, by and large, gave it a good run.

1st place

“Detroit Lions are living the NFL playoff dream Cleveland Browns are still chasing“

Nate Ulrich

Akron Beacon Journal

Judges’ comments: The writer turned an around-town observation into a unique and playful scene-setter, driving home the irony of two fan bases that could long commiserate with each other suddenly being at odds in the isolated interaction. The column established that history through a combination of pre-Super Bowl era success and the futility that followed. Then it drove home the Cleveland-area connections on the Detroit Lions to arrive at the conclusion of why the fan bases should still be on the same side, at least for the playoffs. A clean, educational and whimsical read.

2nd place

“We still have the Cavs and Guardians”

Jim Ingraham

The Chronicle-Telegram

Judges’ comments: A voice that seemingly spoke for every sports fan that endures the "on-the-field" product taking a backseat to "box office" moves and entertainment value. You can get a strong sense of the spirits of a city being lifted by the success of other teams in town. This column had teeth early, then cited dominance on the scoreboard, general demeanor, and multiple contributors in different facets of a game to make an argument for what winning organizations look like.

3rd place

“Remember Richfield Coliseum? It’s just a memory today”

Andy Baskin

Cleveland Jewish News

Judges' comments: A trip down memory lane. There could be more pieces produced about core community gathering places gone by. Worth the read for those who like to reflect on the people they meet, the places they go, and the part they play in shaping the present and the future.

COLUMN OR BLOG: BUSINESS

1st place

"Why 'inclusion' no longer appears in JobsOhio's annual report"

Carrie Ghose

Columbus Business First

Judges' comments: Interesting, well written story. It was not at all what I expected, and it was super easy to read. Nice work.

2nd place

"Test drive of a lifetime"

Erin Pustay Beaven

Rubber News

3rd place

"From The CEO: Your endless meeting cycle may be stifling your innovation"

Fred Koury

Smart Business

COLUMN OR BLOG: LIFESTYLE/FEATURE

1st place

"My wife deserves the world"

Don Detore

Tire Business Newspaper

2nd place

"A swearing toddler is all fun and games until it's your own"

Theresa Bennett

Akron Beacon Journal

3rd place

"The 50 best concerts I ever saw in Northeast Ohio"

Mark J. Price

Akron Beacon Journal

CRIME & JUSTICE

Overall category judges' comments: Very difficult decision ... lots of outstanding entries. Would give Honorable mention to "White Power Outrage" for its willingness to take a hard look at a vein of hate that's hard to face.

1st place

"Cleveland Police Stop and Search Black Drivers at Higher Rates Despite DOJ Oversight"

Mark Puente and Sarah Buduson

The Marshall Project-Cleveland

Judges' comments: The sheer volume of data analyzed to tell us something important wins the day ... and the contest.

2nd place

“Missing in Plain Sight: The Inequity Behind Cincinnati's 'North Fairmount Jane Doe' “

Madeline Fening

Cincinnati CityBeat

Judges' comments: Outstanding for its interesting angle and sensitivity to the wider reality that this crime points up.

3rd place

“My Best Friend's Murder”

Margaret Newkirk

Columbus Monthly

Judges' comments: Breathtaking storytelling.

DATA JOURNALISM

1st place

“Cleveland Police Stop and Search Black Drivers at Higher Rates Despite DOJ Oversight”

Mark Puente and Sarah Buduson

The Marshall Project-Cleveland

Judges' comments: Excellent use of researched stats to identify problems. Quality research turned into an excellent story. Loved the graphics, well done.

2nd place

“Fleeing troubled public schools? Ohio voucher data shows many families already enrolled in private schools”

Laura Hancock

Cleveland.com

3rd place

“Teen crime stats trend down, but police and prosecutors say it's worse”

Cameron Knight, Kevin Grasha and Dan Horn

The Cincinnati Enquirer

EDITORIAL

1st place

“A tale of two DeWines”

Brad Dicken

The Chronicle-Telegram

Judges' comments: Insightful look at gerrymandering and the governor's role in it.

2nd place

“Enough with the catty behavior”

Cheryl Powell

Akron Beacon Journal

3rd place

“The Drive For Stadium Leverage”

Scott Suttell

Crain's Cleveland Business

EDUCATION

1st place

“Aurora math teacher hailed for work with gifted students”

Jeff Saunders

Record Courier

Judges' comments: Teachers who love to teach and use unconventional ways to do so are very inspiring. I believe stories like this give people hope, that there is more to education than just regurgitating base-level information. Particularly focusing on gifted students is also important. While focusing on other students should also be a priority, gifted students sometimes suffer from the assumption that they don't need encouragement or engagement as much as others, because they themselves are so bright. However, just as with any other student, encouragement shows them that they are on the right path and can further fuel their interest in expanding their gifts rather than letting them stagnate.

2nd place

"How President Laura Bloomberg is steering Cleveland State toward more than survival"

Amy Morona

Signal Cleveland

3rd place

"Newark middle school principal placed on leave after reports of bullying, failure to report harassment"

Sarah Sollinger

TheReportingProject.org

ENVIRONMENT

Overall category judges' comments: Very strong entries in this category! High honorable mention to Jill Sell's interesting story on "Hawks in the Backyard" (Beacon Journal) and to Katy Smith's nicely written and comprehensive profile "Nancy of the Forest".

1st place

"Pollinator Gardens or Perfect Lawns?"

Joel Oliphint

Columbus Monthly

Judges' comments: Fascinating look at an alternative to manicured lawns -- and the opposition it can spawn.

2nd place

"A Watershed Moment for the Licking River"

Cedric Rose

Cincinnati Magazine

Judges' comments: Thorough, well-written and beautifully presented story about efforts to save the Licking River -- factual yet with a nice personal touch

3rd place

"10 years after algae bloom crisis, Lake Erie recovery has been mixed"

Dan Shingler

Crain's Cleveland Business

Judges' comments: Thoughtful, thoroughly reported look at the ongoing struggle to prevent algae blooms.

ESSAY**1st place**

"Winner, winner election night dinner. It's pizza in a landslide"

Josh Boose

ideastream

Judges' comments: Food and election night are often the subject of stories and essays, but usually in separate sections of a news publication. This essay cleverly combined both to offer a behind-the-scenes

look in a humble and informative way about what it's like to be in a newsroom on a chaotic night. Cheers to editors who feed their employees!

2nd place

"Trump taking his cues from P.T. Barnum"

Cliff Anthony

Cleveland.com

Judges' comments: I'd heard about a few of Trump's retail ventures, but was surprised to learn about those of other presidents, and hadn't considered the P.T. Barnum connection. This short essay used both facts and ribbing to show that a seemingly trivial presidential pursuit actually says a lot about the election process and the person running for president.

3rd place

"The killing of an historical Summit County pine tree gives us incentive to plant more trees"

Jill Sell

Akron Beacon Journal

Judges' comments: All in one, this essay was a gentle, loving tribute to Ocasek, to a particular pine tree, to trees in general, and to anyone who cares for trees.

FOOD/RESTAURANT

1st place

"Why are there so many chicken restaurants?"

Bev Shaffer

The Repository

Judges' comments: This piece answers the question asked throughout the nation regarding restaurants. The best part is it's in-depth and takes what might be humorous and adds the light touch to a very comprehensive "guide" that virtually leaves no chicken bone unturned. Great job!

2nd place

"Smoking hot: Proof Barbecue's resilient journey to Ohio City"

Rebecca Cahill

FreshWater Cleveland

3rd place

"Melt Bar and Grilled, a former restaurant powerhouse, now fights to survive"

Jeremy Nobile

Crain's Cleveland Business

GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

1st place

"As jobs go, so goes Ohio"

David Knox and Carissa Woytach

The Chronicle-Telegram

Judges' comments: Excellent work on a report that has nationwide significance. Well written and researched and readers can fully understand the issues. Well done!

2nd place

"President Biden visits East Palestine more than 1 year after toxic Ohio train derailment"

Ryan Haidet and Dave DeNatale

WKYC

3rd place

“Newark City Council approves ordinance targeting homeless people in 7-1 vote for 'camping ban' “

Noah Fishman

TheReportingProject.org

HEADLINE

1st place

“Cloverleaf's silver lining is a touch of Gray”

Vince Guerrieri

Medina County Gazette

Judges' comments: The best headline taps into those mindworms that just won't quit us ... while actually delivering an interesting new story. This one definitely achieves this.

2nd place

“Dining reservations: Restaurants in the city center are not back to pre-pandemic levels, though some see more opportunity than others”

Andy Brownfield, Tom Demeropolis, Nikki Kingery and Liz Engel

Cincinnati Business Courier

Judges' comments: Great play "reservations" ... we've had a few.

3rd place

“One for the books: Mercantile Library's \$5 million renovation doubles size of downtown's literary hub”

Nikki Kingery, Tom Demeropolis, Andy Brownfield and Liz Engel

Cincinnati Business Courier

Judges' comments: Blowing new meaning into a cliché .. fantastic!

HEALTH & MEDICAL

1st place

“Loneliness is a silent epidemic”

Ally Marotti

Crain's Cleveland Business

Judges' comments: Really thoughtful, well laid out and smart. Articulated both the problem and potential solutions. And the tone of the story felt perfect. Excellent work.

2nd place

“Raphael Pollock: Fighting Cancer on Two Fronts”

Joel Oliphint

Columbus Monthly

3rd place

“Insurer billed \$14,000 for an insulin pump even with exemption”

Elizabeth B. Kim

The Cincinnati Enquirer

HISTORY

1st place

“The not-so-pretty tale of how Cincinnati became Porkopolis”

Jeff Suess

The Cincinnati Enquirer

Judges' comments: Great story told with humor, wit and just the right amount of seriousness.

2nd place

"Ohio's vice presidential history"

Anthony Shoemaker

The Cincinnati Enquirer, Columbus Dispatch, Akron Beacon Journal and Canton Repository

Judges' comments: Fascinating

3rd place

"Donald Trump, Jacksonian press, and today"

Richard Perloff

The Plain Dealer

Judges' comments: Original idea and great writing

HUMOR

1st place

"Christmas Ale is here! Great Lakes Brewing Co. holds First Pour party"

Marc Bona

Cleveland.com

Judges' comments: The entries were indeed entertaining! Kudos to Marc Bona for thinking outside the box and crafting a festive limerick.

2nd place

"Unwritten novels, unscheduled trips: Retirement's not following the plan"

Cliff Anthony

Cleveland.com

IN-DEPTH REPORT OR SERIES

Overall category judges' comments: Excellent category with a lot of really good work.

1st place

"Art Saves"

Kabir Bhatia, Dave DeOreo, Jean-Marie Papoi and Carrie Wise

Ideastream

Judges' comments: Excellent series about how art saves. Great stuff. Well-crafted stories with incredible layouts which featured the art. High quality, smart, insightful, meaningful work.

2nd place

"A brighter future for carbon black"

Andrew Schunk

Rubber News

3rd place

"Dying Ohio"

Mark Williams, Dean Narciso, Zach Tuggle and Jordan Laird

The Columbus Dispatch

LIFESTYLE FEATURE

1st place

"Shifting Currents"

Annie Nickoloff

Cleveland Magazine

Judges' comments: Excellent story about a niche "family". Lots of detail but still left me wanting more on any of these individuals.

2nd place

“Holy Ravioli!”

Mary McCarty

Cincinnati Magazine

3rd place

“Stairway to Heaven”

Steven Rosen

Cincinnati Magazine

NEIGHBORHOOD/COMMUNITY NEWS

1st place

“The Little Train Town That Could”

Laurie Pike

Cincinnati Magazine

Judges’ comments: This piece captures the essence of local community news. Well written with great art and beautiful layout. Excellent!

2nd place

“More than 50 trucks, trailers travel to North Carolina with hay bales”

Sara Crawford

Medina County Gazette

3rd place

“From dinner table to community lifeline: The Steak Club Foundation’s mission to end food insecurity”

Karin Connelly Rice

FreshWater Cleveland

NEWSLETTER

1st place

“The Daily Frequency”

Staff

Ideastream

2nd place

“The Reporting Project newsletter”

Julia Lerner

TheReportingProject.org

3rd place

“Smart Business Dealmakers Newsletter”

Adam Burroughs and Michael Marzec

Smart Business

OBITUARY

1st place

“Browns celebrate Jim Donovan’s life, honor iconic broadcaster accordingly in win”

Nate Ulrich

Akron Beacon Journal

Judges’ comments: This is a well-written and well-researched piece that serves a tremendous tribute to a beloved broadcaster.

2nd place

“Dan Coughlin”

Mike McIntyre

Ideastream

Judges’ comments: I appreciate the personal touch in this thoroughly researched obituary that tells the heartfelt story of a man who clearly meant the world to a Catholic High School and his community.

3rd place

“Gerry Faust”

Scott Springer

The Cincinnati Enquirer

Judges’ comments: Plenty of detail supports why this coach was worthy of such a robust obituary.

PROFILE

1st place

“Bernie Kosar’s Fourth Quarter”

Dillon Stewart

Cleveland Magazine

Judges’ comments: This story of the fallen football star evens the playing field for the average reader. An honest profile that doesn’t hold back on the good and the bad. Very interesting and well done!

2nd place

“Ron Puglisi: The pizza king of Ashland County”

Dillon Carr

Ashland Source

3rd place

“Imohkai Okolo profile”

Bryce Buyakie

Akron Beacon Journal

RACE & DIVERSITY REPORTING

1st place

“Cleveland Police Stop and Search Black Drivers at Higher Rates Despite DOJ Oversight”

Mark Puente and Sarah Buduson

The Marshall Project-Cleveland

Judges’ comments: Important work done well.

2nd place

“Bridging the nature gap: Empowering urban youth with outdoor experiences”

Grant Segall

FreshWater Cleveland

3rd place

“Grieving Gaza”

Elizabeth B. Kim

The Cincinnati Enquirer

REAL ESTATE

Overall category judges’ comments: Reporters did a good job of going beyond reporting on a transaction or two. They got sources to provide context for a market in transition.

1st place

“The New Downtown”

Chris Wetterich and Staff

Cincinnati Business Courier

Judges’ comments: Great, comprehensive update on what’s happening to downtown real estate. Well written and great graphics.

2nd place

“Is the office doomed?”

Bonnie Meibers

Columbus Business First

Judges’ comments: Nicely written look at downtown office challenges.

3rd place

“Rite Aid closures leave behind empty retail spaces with murky futures”

Alexandra Golden

Crain's Cleveland Business

Judges’ comments: Good response to a shifting situation. Sources helped explain that different locations face different fates.

REVIEW/CRITICISM

1st place

“Jason Isbell lingers on isolation in sold-out Ohio University show”

Andy Downing

Matter News

Judges’ comments: From a powerful lede to examples of lyrics and stories, this review provided an intriguing look at a singer-songwriter who truly connected to the audience. It effectively captures the essence of his introspective and isolating themes.

2nd place

“Cristian Măcelaru inspires in first CSO concert as music director-designate”

Janelle Gelfand

Cincinnati Business Courier

Judges’ comments: Excellent combination of historical perspectives and performance notes helped bring context to the musical presentation critique.

3rd place

“Billie Eilish concert”

David Wysong

The Cincinnati Enquirer

Judges’ comments: The fanboy review provided a vivid account of her performance and the high production value of the event, but didn’t offer any criticism. The 5 Takeaways helped provide focus, but the article could have used some editing. Odd to put the opener as the first takeaway.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Overall category judges’ comments: Really great submissions by all!

1st place

“Schools use this app to prevent suicide but does it work?”

Elizabeth B. Kim

The Cincinnati Enquirer

Judges' comments: Very interesting read and timely topic with the cross section of AI and mental health.

2nd place

"Kent State professor David Costello part of global climate change research"

Jeff Saunders

Record Courier

Judges' comments: I like the inclusion of explaining why this research is applicable.

3rd place

"Tires: An industry in 4.0 flux"

Andrew Schunk

Rubber News

Judges' comments: I didn't think I'd want to read about tires, but this story made me interested!

SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN - ALL PLATFORMS

Overall category judges' comments: Well done Akron Beacon Journal for producing a strong variety of social content before and after the eclipse. Playful, informative and fun.

1st place

"Total Solar Eclipse"

Tawney Beans

Akron Beacon Journal

2nd place

"NEO Ice Cream Trail"

Tawney Beans

Akron Beacon Journal

SPORTS FEATURE

Overall category judges' comments: There were great submissions all around. It was difficult to pick the top three. The stories I was drawn to were the ones with a twist, and a non-traditional ending.

1st place

The Repository

Tim Botos

"The battle of the beatens"

Judges' comments: Well done story about two teams that are underdogs. I was hooked from the beginning.

2nd place

"Wicket Fun"

John Stowel

Cincinnati Magazine

Judges' comments: Interesting story about a group of people finding community through a sport!

3rd place

"How Pete Rose sees paradox of MLB gambling ties, his lifetime ban"

Gordon Wittenmyer

The Cincinnati Enquirer

Judges' comments: I like this application of looking into sports betting, it was a very interesting angle to something I've seen a lot of stories about.

SPORTS NEWS

1st place

"Stuff of legends: Never-quit Grizzlies capture another epic battle"

Albert Grindle

Medina County Gazette

Judges' comments: This is writing that makes the reader feel the moment. Game recaps can be dry, but this one takes storytelling to a new level. "Stuff of legends," indeed.

2nd place

"Browns are moving to Brook Park"

Scott Petrak

The Chronicle-Telegram

Judges' comments: Balanced reporting walks the reader through a controversial decision to move the Brown's home outside the city limits. Well done.

TRADE REPORT

Overall category judges' comments: This category was very difficult to judge. Every submission was outstanding, and choosing between them was a challenge. Every writer should be very proud of their work.

1st place

"Tire industry growing strong in South Carolina"

Erin Pustay Beaven

Rubber News

2nd place

"A world away, Global Rubber Industries eyes North American success"

Don Detore

Tire Business Newspaper

3rd place

"Gus Herlong: Humanitarian of the Year"

Kathy McCarron

Tire Business Newspaper

TRAVEL & TRANSPORTATION

1st place

"Does Red Mean Go or Stop?"

David Holthaus

Cincinnati Magazine

Judges' comments: In-depth look at Cincinnati's bike-sharing program and the problems it shares with some counterparts across the country. It was interesting to learn how the success of e-bike programs doesn't actually guarantee their continued success, and why.

2nd place

"Shipping problems make waves"

Kathy McCarron

Tire Business Newspaper

WEATHER

1st place

"Blind spot in weather radar system may leave some central Ohio areas vulnerable"

Emma Baum

TheReportingProject.org

Judges' comments: An important story that reminds us why investing in weather technology and the NWS is so critical. This is the type of piece that not only serves as an important warning to people who live in this zone, but it could also drive change that improves the chances of detecting the next tornado.

VIDEO

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

1st place

"Ernest Warther Museum woodcarvings are a Tuscarawas County treasure"

Dave DeOreo and Jean-Marie Papoi

Ideastream

Judges' comments: Really interesting feature that proves the value of the small museums that surround us and the amazing people who inspired them.

BREAKING NEWS

1st place

"Dairy Farm Fire"

Dave Nethers and David Bradford

WJW Fox 8

Judges' comments: Good story about a community coming together.

BUSINESS & FINANCIAL

1st place

"A failure of government: As food-stamp theft soars in Lorain, experts say urgent help is needed"

Michelle Jarboe

WEWS-TV 5

Judges' comments: Solid reporting. Hit the story from all angles and included what it'll take to fix the problem. Good stuff.

2nd place

"2024 Greater Cleveland Year in Review"

Michael Collier

Greater Cleveland Partnership

CONTINUING COVERAGE

1st place

"A City in Turmoil"

Scott Noll

WEWS-TV 5

2nd place

"The Murder of Officer Derbin"

Peggy Gallek, Ed Gallek and Darsi Ayres

WJW Fox 8

3rd place

"Cleveland Street Takeovers"

Tara Morgan

WEWS-TV 5

CRIME & JUSTICE

1st place

"The Park Hills Survivor: How a single fingerprint and a victim's vivid memory solved a 40-year-old cold case"

Jessica Schmidt and Tom Dewees

WXIX

2nd place

"Real Time Crime"

Tara Morgan

WEWS-TV 5

DOCUMENTARY

1st place

"Ten Cent Beer Night"

Andy Fishman, Marc Singer and Chris Gibilisco

WJW Fox 8

Judges' comments: A poignant and enjoyable work that captures the "back in the day" feelings. A sweet walk for all viewers. Well done!

EDUCATION

1st place

"School Bus Driver Shortage"

Dave Nethers and David Bradford

WJW Fox 8

Judges' comments: Insightful report that covers all angles of an issue few outside of education consider. Great work!

GENERAL NEWS

1st place

"Prone Restraint"

Tara Morgan

WEWS-TV 5

Judges' comments: Compelling story and solid reporting. Well done!

GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

1st place

"Millions Owed, None Paid"

Scott Noll and Rob Klein

WJW Fox 8

Judges' comments: Thorough reporting...well produced piece that makes it easy for the viewer to follow.

2nd place

"Safety Director Resigns"

Peggy Gallek and Ed Gallek

WJW Fox 8

Judges' comments: I love any story that attempts to hold government accountable, and the reporters here certainly did that. From a producing stand point, I found the piece choppy and at times difficult to follow.

3rd place

"Early campaign foreshadows Bernie Moreno's upset of Sherrod Brown"

Darrel Rowland
WSYX-TV

HEALTH & MEDICAL

1st place

“Battling Deadly Brain Damage”

Duane Pohlman, Holden Robinson and News Staff

WKRC-TV

Judges’ comments: Compelling piece told through a human lens.

2nd place

“First Responder: PTSD”

Jessica Dill and Chris Reece

WJW Fox 8

3rd place

“Community pharmacies are closing across Ohio due to drug middleman”

Darrel Rowland

WSYX-TV

HISTORY

1st place

“Ten Cent Beer Night”

Andy Fishman, Marc Singer and Chris Gibilisco

WJW Fox 8

Judges’ comments: A fantastic retelling of a marketing blunder.

2nd place

“A century later, Lorain remembers resiliency after 1924 tornado”

Jean-Marie Papoi

Ideastream

Judges’ comments: A fine way to capture history that's fading from collective memory.

3rd place

“Just providence: There's a plan to save two historic mansions on Cleveland's East Side”

Michelle Jarboe

WEWS-TV 5

Judges’ comments: It's a story we see again and again in our rustbelt cities. An excellent story about efforts to save a piece of history.

HUMAN INTEREST

1st place

“The Save”

Duane Pohlman, Holden Robinson, Kevin Barnett and Austin Tanner

WKRC-TV

Judges’ comments: A heart-warming story that was well produced on every front - strong writing, engaging storytelling, smart videography and editing, compelling reporter delivery. Bravo!

2nd place

“Sheltering Hope”

Eleanor Hayes, Janelle Bass Hawthorne, TV20 Staff and Patrick Fenner

TV20

Judges' comments: Thorough reporting and excellent production value.

3rd place

"Demon House: Revisited"

Suzanne Stratford and David Bradford

WJW Fox 8

Judges' comments: Great pacing and editing help keep the viewer engaged.

IN-DEPTH REPORT OR SERIES

1st place

"Fallout"

Duane Pohlman, Holden Robinson and Tim Geraghty

WKRC-TV

2nd place

"The Murder of Julian Wood"

Peggy Gallek, Ed Gallek and Darcie Loreno

WJW Fox 8

NEIGHBORHOOD/COMMUNITY NEWS

1st place

"Cleveland nonprofit aims to save moms and babies. Neighbors say, 'not in my backyard.' "

Michelle Jarboe, Anthony Garcia and Karen Van Vleck

WEWS-TV 5

Judges' comments: A well-balanced and well told story that tackles a NIMBY issue in an engaging way. Fantastic production value. Bravo to the videographer/editor.

NEWS FEATURE

1st place

"That's it for Euclid Beach': Former mobile home park residents settle into new lives"

Michelle Jarboe and Dennis Spronck

WEWS-TV 5

Judges' comments: This was a wonderful integration of music, historic photos, emotional soundbites and reporting to follow up on a challenging situation. Creative writing and standup transitions bring the story together in an impactful way.

PUBLIC SERVICE/PUBLIC AFFAIRS

1st place

"It Feels Like a Slap in the Face"

Scott Noll and Rob Klein

WEWS-TV 5

2nd place

"The State of Ohio" - Nov. 1, 2024

Karen Kasler, Daniel Konik, Jo Ingles and Sarah Donaldson

Ohio Public Television

3rd place

"Ideas"

Mike McIntyre, Leigh Barr, J. Nungesser and Ygal Kaufman

ideastream

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

1st place

“Big Ideas. Bold Ventures: LAND Moto”

Michael Collier

Greater Cleveland Partnership

SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN - ALL PLATFORMS

1st place

“Ohio lawmakers ban "foreign" campaigns contribution - with no proof they exist”

Darrel Rowland

WSYX-TV

SPORTS COMMENTARY

1st place

“Ken Carmantary”

Ken Carman

WJW Fox 8

SPORTS FEATURE

1st place

“Zanesville's Paige Calendine Inspires Other Gymnasts”

Steven Wasserman

WHIZ Media Group

Judges' comments: Well written story with good pacing. Videography looks great, but interviews need work. Why use that ugly stick mic? Also, your interview subjects need to be lit.

2nd place

“Rust and Rubber”

Andrew Theophilus and Owen Baker

TheReportingProject.org

Judges' comments: Visually interesting, but the story itself needs work. The pacing of the opening was slow...and didn't clearly establish a focus. The pacing picks up, but the documentary needs a concise focus. At times, the story line felt disjointed. A little more direction would go a long way!

SPORTSCAST

1st place

“Ken Carman sportscast”

Ken Carman

WJW Fox 8

Judges' comments: Great energy from the anchor, who oozes personality! The "Carmantary" -- I loved it! I imagine his viewers love him too! The sportscast was well produced...fantastic pacing. I walked away with a solid understanding of that day's sports headlines. Also, it's great to see a station devoting so much time to sports. Helps when you have an anchor with that much talent and personality!

WEATHERCAST

1st place

“Weather Class”

Alexis Walters and Chris Reece

WJW Fox 8

Judges' comments: Great and unique idea to have the class help out with the weathercast! Never seen that before. Some of the kids are naturals. Smart way to engage the youth.

AUDIO

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

1st place

"Cleveland is a bustling Metropolis in the new 'Superman' film"

Kabir Bhatia

Ideastream

Judges' comments: Nicely done.

BREAKING NEWS

1st place

"Northeast Ohio experiences solar eclipse"

Staff

Ideastream

Judges' comments: Excellent way to cover audibly what is essentially a visual event. Well done.

BUSINESS & FINANCIAL

Overall category judges' comments: The craft beer sales story was well researched and very well done.

All three other entries were well over the 15 minute time limit in the rules of this category.

1st place

"Craft beer sales are down. Ohio's mid-size breweries are tapping into their strengths to stay afloat"

Anna Huntsman

Ideastream

Judges' comments: This entry was well researched and very interesting. Good job!

CONTINUING COVERAGE

1st place

"Ohio faces energy crisis as it chases high-tech jobs"

Sarah Donaldson

Ohio Public Radio

Judges' comments: In-depth, detailed coverage of an important, timely topic.

2nd place

"Warren hospital closure:"

Taylor Wizner

Ideastream

CRIME & JUSTICE

1st place

"Cleveland police captain promoted to acting commander after making anti-LGBTQ slurs"

Matt Richmond

Ideastream

Judges' comments: Compelling accountability reporting.

EDUCATION

1st place

"In Painesville, helping Latino students, one math problem at a time"

Conor Morris

Ideastream

Judges' comments: An interesting and in-depth report that covers a topic that impacts the nation. Great work!

ENVIRONMENT

1st place

"Money from the Inflation Reduction Act aims to bolster forest farming in southeast Ohio"

Theo Peck-Suzuki

WOUB Public Media

Judges' comments: Well told story about an important subject. Good stuff.

2nd place

"Black Birders Week fosters diverse Northeast Ohio birdwatching community and outdoor family bonding"

Zaria Johnson

Ideastream

GENERAL NEWS

1st place

"Snack or weapon? Cleveland City Council piqued by protestor's persimmons"

Matt Richmond

Ideastream

Judges' comments: I really enjoyed the framing of what could have been a dull council meeting follow.

GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

1st place

"U.S. Senate race feature on Sherrod Brown"

Josh Boose

Ideastream

Judges' comments: An interesting way to look at such a longtime candidate. I especially appreciate the views of a staunch Dem; someone who voted for Brown but not for Harris; and someone who wouldn't vote for either.

HEALTH & MEDICAL

1st place

"After years of addiction, this Lorain man is fighting food insecurity through urban farming"

Stephen Langel

Ideastream

Judges' comments: An intimate, sound-rich look at one person's solution and journey within a systemic issue affecting so many in America.

HISTORY

1st place

"The Manhattan Project of World War I? Exploring Ohio's murky link to chemical warfare"

Abigail Bottar

Ideastream

Judges' comments: While there has been some previous reporting on the Mousetrap project, Abigail Bottar's timely feature updates us on US history and current attempts to memorialize the site.

HUMAN INTEREST

1st place

“Can political campaign button sales predict an election? These history buffs think so”

Ygal Kaufman

Ideastream

IN-DEPTH REPORT OR SERIES

1st place

“A Slice of Politics”

Staff

Ideastream

Judges’ comments: Compelling and well researched work covering all issues related to the election. Good to see all sides represented. Great work!

2nd place

“2024: Year In Review”

Karen Kasler, Jo Ingles and Sarah Donaldson

Ohio Public Radio

NEIGHBORHOOD/COMMUNITY NEWS

1st place

“Organizers call for community investment from Huntington after push to reopen Buckeye bank”

Richard Cunningham

Ideastream

Judges’ comments: An important story about the larger ripples created by seemingly small civic actions. Contextualizes the history of why and how so many Black communities in the US become economic “deserts.”

2nd place

“A senior citizen prom at Fort Frye High School gives generations the chance to connect”

Theo Peck-Suzuki

WOUB Public Media

3rd place

“The best high school League of Legends team in Ohio lives in Morgan County”

Theo Peck-Suzuki

WOUB Public Media

NEWS FEATURE

1st place

“Dear Struggling in Ohio, You’re Not Alone”

Josh Boose and Ygal Kaufman

Ideastream

Judges’ comments: Heartwarming story, sensitively told. Excellent use of audio.

2nd place

“A town in southeast Ohio comes around to the idea of sheltering those experiencing homelessness”

Theo Peck-Suzuki

WOUB Public Media

Judges’ comments: Wonderful interview with homeless man expresses the concerns of many. Although the soundbite with the advocate was helpful, it could have used interviews with others to get broader points of view.

3rd place

"What went wrong with Ohio's minimum wage issue? It depends on who you ask"

Sarah Donaldson

Ohio Public Radio

Judges' comments: Important story, but it could have been told in a more impactful way.

PODCAST

1st place

"Ohio Politics Explained Podcast"

Haley BeMiller

The Cincinnati Enquirer, Columbus Dispatch, Akron Beacon Journal and Canton Repository

Judges' comments: Good interviews helped humanize the story, but it would have been more effective to hear the family interviews interspersed with the "official" soundbites to provide more variety and perspective. Nice focus on solutions.

2nd place

"Shuffle"

Amanda Rabinowitz and Brittany Nader

Ideastream

Judges' comments: Wonderful interplay of music and quotes. I especially liked the "find our pocket" soundbite.

3rd place

"How to save energy in your plastics plant and get help paying for it: PMM Insight"

Bruce Geiselman

Plastics Machinery & Manufacturing

Judges' comments: Timely story of clear interest to the intended audience, though a bit long and could have included other voices including those addressing barriers to energy efficiency. Nice to include extra information, such as the states with the most-generous incentive programs.

PROFILE

1st place

"A Cleveland teen was shot in the head and survived. How do she and her mother cope?"

Conor Morris

Ideastream

Judges' comments: Good human interest aftermath story

PUBLIC SERVICE/PUBLIC AFFAIRS

1st place

"Ohio reviews diversity scholarships"

Sarah Donaldson

Ohio Public Radio

2nd place

"Transforming the future of Akron's Interbelt"

Sound of Ideas team

Ideastream

RACE & DIVERSITY REPORTING

1st place

"The track and field program gets revived at the alma mater of Olympian Jesse Owens"

Gabriel Kramer

Ideastream

Judges' comments: Nice piece about overcoming systemic adversity. Good historical reference.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

1st place

"Forever chemicals are everywhere. How worried should we be?"

Jeff St. Clair

Ideastream

SPORTS FEATURE

1st place

"You can't watch a game that way.' Play-by-play delay fouls up Guardians games for visually impaired"

Abbey Marshall

Ideastream

Judges' comments: This story is a fascinating and well-reported examination of an issue that affects a small segment of the population -- but the saga resonates universally. This story of a blind baseball fan whose ability to follow the game has been disrupted grabbed me right away, and I learned about a whole new world when it comes to the challenges of the sight-impaired. This work is a winner.

USE OF SOUND

1st place

"What makes music scary? Instrumentation, composition and your imagination"

Carrie Wise

Ideastream

Judges' comments: The spooky music from iconic movies amid the recording allows readers/listeners to better understand the sounds being described and what draws us to them and how they spark fear.

VISUALS

DRONE PHOTOGRAPH

1st place

"Welcome to Cleveland"

Michael Collier

Greater Cleveland Partnership

Judges' comments: Terrific view of the city skyline.

2nd place

"Go for a Drive!"

Justin Schafer and Brittany Dexter

Cincinnati Magazine

EDITORIAL CARTOON

1st place

"Daily Planet Superman"

Jeffrey Darcy

Cleveland.com

Judges' comments: Excellent graphics, reminiscent of the Superman TV show. Spunky and fun!

FEATURE PHOTOGRAPH

1st place

“White Out”

Phil Masturzo

Akron Beacon Journal

Judges’ comments: Stark but wonderfully evocative of the storm. Love the curvy line and the placement of the man and the tree.

2nd place

“Dyngus Day Cleveland”

Ryan Loew

Ideastream

3rd place

“Snowflakes”

Jeff Lange

Akron Beacon Journal

FEATURE VIDEOGRAPHY

1st place

“Hope through decay: Ohio artists document places reclaimed by nature”

Jean-Marie Papoi

ideastream

Judges’ comments: Wonderful combination of videography and narration by sources to create an interesting story.

ILLUSTRATION, SINGLE IMAGE

1st place

“Old Fashioned”

Jeff Lange

Akron Beacon Journal

Judges’ comments: Mouth-watering styling.

ILLUSTRATION, MULTIPLE FOR ONE STORY

1st place

“Keep Cincinnati Weird”

Emi Villavicencio

Cincinnati Magazine

GENERAL NEWS PHOTOGRAPHY

1st place

“Nixon takes the stand”

Lisa Scalfaro

Akron Beacon Journal

Judges’ comments: Great catch of a dramatic scene in court.

2nd place

“Moreno”

Mike Cardew

Akron Beacon Journal

3rd place

“Birdie”

Phil Masturzo

Akron Beacon Journal

MULTIPLE-PHOTO ESSAY, GALLERY OR SLIDESHOW

1st place

“Valley City Frog Jump”

Jeff Lange

Akron Beacon Journal

Judges’ comments: Nice variety of photo subjects to illustrate the many aspects of the contest.

2nd place

“One Year Later”

Lisa Scalfaro

Akron Beacon Journal

3rd place

“Blink Cincinnati 2024”

Corrie Schaffeld

Cincinnati Business Courier

MULTIPLATFORM PROJECT

1st place

“Forever chemicals are everywhere. How worried should we be?”

Jeff St. Clair, Zaria Johnson and Taylor Wizner

Ideastream

Judges’ comments: Balanced use of multiple forms of media that combined tell a compelling series of stories on why our audiences should care about forever chemicals and what they need to know. I even learned some new things!

PAGE DESIGN, COVER - BROADSHEET, TABS & MAGAZINES

1st place

“Love and Romance in the Queen City”

Emi Villavicencio

Cincinnati Magazine

Judges’ comments: Eye-catching and colorful design...really sets the tone.

2nd place

“The Book cover”

Michael McCrady

Rubber News

Judges’ comments: Clean, colorful design.

3rd place

“Exec of the Year cover”

Michael McCrady

Rubber News

Judges’ comments: Standard design, but it gets the job done in a way that’s appealing to the eye.

PAGE DESIGN, SINGLE PAGE - BROADSHEET, TABS & MAGAZINES

1st place

“Who Do You Trust?”

Cleveland Magazine

Abigail Archer

Judges' comment: Spectacular image, with motion lines and floating papers indicating confusion and contradictions between the candidates. Bright patriotic colors provide a burst of energy.

2nd place

"Shifting Currents"

Erin Stinard

Cleveland Magazine

Judges' comments: Surprised at this entry, as vertically stacked letters (arranging letters in a column, one directly above the other, instead of horizontally) often are discouraged due to potential readability issues and awkward spacing. The photo, however, makes a compelling background for the article introduction.

PORTRAIT/PERSONALITY PHOTOGRAPH

1st place

"Greenhouse gardening in Wooster"

Ryan Loew

Ideastream

Judges' comments: Nice positioning of the subject in a corner to show a greater expanse of the greenhouse.

2nd place

"Female Football"

Phil Masturzo

Akron Beacon Journal

3rd place

"Drumm"

Mike Cardew

Akron Beacon Journal

SPOT NEWS PHOTOGRAPH

1st place

"Windham Tornado"

Jeff Lange

Akron Beacon Journal

Judges' comments: The man looking out the window really makes this photo, humanizing the destruction

2nd place

"Cleveland man arrested following Elyria car chase"

Bruce Bishop

The Chronicle-Telegram

3rd place

"Cincinnati Inauguration Day 2024"

Corrie Schaffeld

Cincinnati Business Courier

SPORTS PHOTOGRAPHY

1st place

"Cornerkick"

Jeff Lange

Akron Beacon Journal

Judges' comments; Dramatic action shot with wonderful framing.

2nd place

"Somewhere Over the Hurdle"

Phil Masturzo

Akron Beacon Journal

3rd place

"Bunny Ball"

Kristin Bauer

The Chronicle-Telegram

STUDIO PHOTOGRAPHY

1st place

"Crushing It: Rhinegeist Brewery new line of Beer"

Corrie Schaffeld

Cincinnati Business Courier

Judges' comments: Good lighting and composition.

2nd place

"Vintage Vibes"

Jeremy Kramer and Brittany Dexter

Cincinnati Magazine

WEBSITE HOMEPAGE DESIGN

1st place

"Ideastream Public Media"

Staff

Ideastream

Judges' comments: Nice and clean. Well organized.

2nd place

"cjn.org"

CJN Staff

Cleveland Jewish News

3rd place

"FOX 8 News"

FOX 8 web team

WJW Fox 8

COLLEGE STUDENT MEDIA

WRITING, GENERAL NEWS

1st place

"Justice for Stone Foltz"

Blake Pierce

BG Falcon Media

2nd place

"Tri-C East's Student Government: Energized and Excited?"

Emmanuel Harvey

Tri-C The Voice

3rd place

"Understanding the electoral college and why your vote counts"

Casey Couch

The Cleveland Stater

WRITING, FEATURE

1st place

"Blue Angels thrill at the Cleveland Air Show"

Casey Couch

The Cleveland Stater

Judges' comments: A nice lead really pulls the reader into the event. Overall nice job.

2nd place

"Do college students have a sports gambling problem?"

Jordan Shelton

The Cleveland Stater

Judges' comments: Good research but would have liked more direct quotes about the negative consequences.

3rd place

"Cleveland Ballet's "The Nutcracker": See the iconic ballet at Playhouse Square this holiday season"

Evan Peters

The Vindicator

WRITING, SPORTS

1st place

"1984 national hockey championship remembered"

Ben Corak, Lucas Lucas Kleimeyer, Steve Iwanek and Drake Harlett

BG Falcon Media

Judges' comments: Riveting story; concise, clear journalism.

2nd place

"Miles of grit: How Cleveland State's women's cross country strides towards success"

Casey Couch

The Vindicator

Judges' comments: Great storytelling.

3rd place

"Women's Soccer Team Declared OAC Champions, Defeating John Carroll 3-2"

Evelyn Megery

Northern Review

Judges' comments: Crisp, clean writing. Great storytelling.

AUDIO, GENERAL NEWS

1st place

"Heights Now: John Carroll evaluating legal options in zoning battle with Shaker Heights"

Laken Kincaid and Evan Richwalsky

John Carroll University

AUDIO, FEATURE

1st place

“Bus brings arts and crafts to local kids”

Betty Kankam-Boadu

WOUB Public Media

Judges’ comments: Beautifully used natural sound and compelling interviews to weave together a nice feature with a heartfelt message.

2nd place

“Meals on Wheels”

Alison Patton

WOUB Public Media

3rd place

“Ohio Youth Fire & EMS Training Academy”

Haley Swaino

WOUB Public Media

VIDEO, GENERAL NEWS

1st place

”Intoxicating Hemp Regulations”

Donovan Varney

WOUB Public Media

2nd place

“West Union Street Construction Confusion”

Haley Swaino

WOUB Public Media

3rd place

“Ohio Tick Population”

Haley Swaino

WOUB Public Media

VIDEO, FEATURE

1st place

“Local bike club struggles with volunteer shortage”

Alison Patton

WOUB Public Media

2nd place

“Ohio Youth Fire & EMS Training Academy”

Haley Swaino

WOUB Public Media

3rd place

”Student Highlight: How the Art of Photography Has Impacted Anna Kate Jackson”

Evelyn Megery

Northern Review

VIDEO, SPORTS

1st place

"Eastern Honor Walk"

Maddie Kiefer

WOUB Public Media

Judges' comments: Effective use of multiple camera perspectives to tell a heartwarming story. I especially like that you miked an alumnus on the field – would be nice to see more soundbites this way.

2nd place

"Painting with BGSU men's soccer's Bennett Painter"

Lucas Kleimeyer, Sam Barrett and Raymond Cotis

BG Falcon Media

Judges' comments: Clever idea to try painting with Mr. Painter – especially with a two-camera shoot – though I'm not sure viewers would find the information very compelling.

VISUALS, GRAPHICS

1st place

"How to be a Falcon hockey fan"

Nay Say and Ben Corak

BG Falcon Media

Judges' comments: The winning entry was fun, informative, and a perfect example of how infographics should work. Bravo!

2nd place

"Rite Aid Closure in Ada and Its Impact on Patient Care"

Arin Wade

Northern Review

3rd place

"Here's how we would Spend Ohio Northern's Money (Probably)"

Gabriel Mott

Northern Review

VISUALS, PAGE DESIGN

Overall category judges' comments: This was a challenging category to judge, because there were three significantly different types of layouts. The main reason these rose to the top is because it seemed to thread the needle between giving readers something interesting to look at -- the photos and the bullet points or the quote -- and gave them a place to look for more info. I'm also a sucker for a QR code.

1st place

"Lokkeberg and Zlinka"

Vic Miller, Nay Say and Emerald Shanefelt

BG Falcon Media

Judges' comments: What really pushed this one over the top, for me, was the photo and positioning of the two hockey players. You did a very good job setting me up visually to understand what was going on here after just a glance. In a world where we're fighting for attention every day, the more you can do with one glance, the better.

2nd place

"Garnder Sisters"

Nay Say

BG Falcon Media

3rd place

Who will be the champs?"

Vic Miller, Emerald Shanefelt and Nay Say

BG Falcon Media"

VISUALS, PHOTOGRAPHY

1st place

"The ONU Holiday Spectacular Evokes Christmas Spirit in Annual Performances"

Evelyn Megery

Northern Review

2nd place

"ONU Celebrates the Eclipse"

Evelyn Megery, Gabriel Mott and Anna Kate Jackson

Northern Review

3rd place

"Wrestling Claims First Place at 43rd Annual ONU Invitational"

Evelyn Megery

Northern Review

VISUALS, VIDEOGRAPHY

1st place

"Student Highlight: How the Art of Photography Has Impacted Anna Kate Jackson"

Evelyn Megery

Northern Review

EDITORIAL & COMMENTARY

1st place

"Will I ever see a woman president in my lifetime?"

Isabella Zinchini

The News Record

Judges' comments: A well-written piece that reflects the opinion of many women. The work is honest and from the heart. Well done!

2nd place

"Safety last, ignorance first: the CSU motto?"

Kat Magalski

The Cleveland Stater

3rd place

"Why Higher Ed Is Getting Weird: The Enrollment Cliff, Smart Program Cuts, and What ONU's Doing Right"

Arin Wade

Northern Review

BEST IN OHIO

BEST IN OHIO: COLLEGE REPORTER (PRINT/ONLINE)

1st place

Michael Patterson

John Carroll University

BEST IN OHIO: COLLEGE REPORTER (VIDEO)

1st place

Alexandria Radde

Kent State University

Judges' comments: Lex Radde is clearly a gifted journalist. Her reports are thoughtful and delivered with the confidence and poise of a veteran TV reporter.

BEST IN OHIO: FREELANCE REPORTER

1st place

David Holthaus

Cincinnati Magazine and Soapbox Media

Judges' comments: Vivid writing that captures a sense of place and spirit.

2nd place

Matt Florjancic

The Chronicle-Telegram

3rd place

Grant Segall

FreshWater Cleveland, Crain's Cleveland Business, The Land and West Life News

BEST IN OHIO: HEADLINE WRITER

1st place

Kevin Aprile

The Chronicle-Telegram

Judges' comments: This collection of clever headlines succeeds every time in capturing the essence of the story in just a few words. Beyond that, they also match exquisitely with the photos. The deck heads/secondary heads are also smartly done, which factored into the judging.

2nd place

Bob Jacob

Cleveland Jewish News

Judges' comments: The headline efficiently conjures up the best Michael Jackson memories for fans of a certain age. Even better, it does so without forcing anything. The headline conveys the essence of the story, whether you're Michael Jackson's biggest fan or even if you've never heard of him.

BEST IN OHIO: GRAPHIC DESIGNER

1st place

Stephen Valentine

Cleveland Jewish News

Judges' comments: Nice, splashy spreads!

2nd place

Jessica Simon

Cleveland Jewish News

BEST IN OHIO: ART DIRECTOR

1st place

Erin Stinard

Cleveland Magazine

2nd place

Michael McCrady

Rubber News

BEST IN OHIO: ILLUSTRATOR

1st place

Jeff Darcy

Cleveland.com

Judges' comments: Creative and amusing cartoons. The art and the words wonderfully convey the message.

2nd place

Jason Bredehoeft

The Columbus Dispatch

BEST IN OHIO: PHOTOJOURNALIST (STILL IMAGERY)

1st place

Bruce Bishop

The Chronicle-Telegram

Judges' comments: Bruce Bishop shows skill in photographing a variety of settings from crime to cute kids.

2nd place

Kristin Bauer

The Chronicle-Telegram

3rd place

Corrie Schaffeld

Cincinnati Business Courier

BEST IN OHIO: PHOTOJOURNALIST (VIDEO)

Overall category judges' comments: I enjoyed judging this category. Great body of work with important stories.

1st place

Courtney Hergesheimer

The Columbus Dispatch

2nd place

Jean-Marie Papoi

Ideastream

3rd place

Chris Reece

WJW Fox 8

BEST IN OHIO: SPORTS REPORTER (PRINT/ONLINE)

1st place

Gordon Wittenmyer

The Cincinnati Enquirer

Judges' comments: The submissions show an ability to work the room, to revive old arguments with new twists, and to take the reader along for the ride. Pete Rose's ban from baseball has often been publicized, but the writer went to great lengths to look at the case through the lens of legalized gambling, scandals of

the distant past (White Sox) and more recent present (Mizuhara), and the HOF voting procedures from the beginning. The Terry Francona hiring story was well-rounded, covering his health concerns, the front office pursuit, respect around the game, and looking at recent successes and failures in bringing in proven, future HOF managers. Can you imagine the buzz around baseball after Juan Soto signed his mega deal with the Mets? It does beg the question of what future contracts of budding stars might look like, and Wittenmyer explores that as it pertains to Elly De La Cruz.

2nd place

Joey Kaufman

The Columbus Dispatch

Judges' comments: It's important to remember the past, and though there are fewer and fewer who saw Archie Griffin play for Ohio State, his accomplishments are remembered for a community that he has since called his home. The reader is taken through his playing career, the Heisman Trophy ceremony, how the masses remember him, his place in the community, and the family's dynamics. The beat writer sprinkles in features on rising stars on the offensive and defensive side of the ball for Ohio State football. Not all the news is happening on the field, and Kaufman also takes a look at how Ohio State will look to provide funding for its student-athletes.

3rd place

Nate Ulrich

Akron Beacon Journal

Judges' comments: You probably won't find a more entertaining story in the contest than Ulrich's look back in time at "10-Cent Beer Night" at the old ballgame. A fun, lively piece that opens with some fans remembering their glory days decades after the mayhem.

BEST IN OHIO: SPORTS REPORTER (VIDEO)

1st place

Ken Carman

WJW Fox 8

Judges' comments: Ken Carman clearly has an infectious passion for all sports at all levels, from high school to college to professional teams, as well as knowledge and skill in delivering everything from game summaries to commentaries, or rather, "Carmantaries."

BEST IN OHIO: ON-AIR TALENT (AUDIO)

1st place

Amy Eddings

Ideastream

Judges' comments: What a voice! Thoughtful interviews and stories, including pieces reflecting a wide mix of perspectives. Beautiful narration throughout.

BEST IN OHIO: NEWS REPORTER (PRINT/ONLINE)

Overall category judges' comments: Excellent category. We'd also give Honorable Mentions to Jennifer Pignolet and Sheridan Hendrix because there were so many entries in this category.

1st place

Dan Eaton

Columbus Business First

Judges' comments: Terrific collection of stories. Love the writing style, just so easy and flowing, and loved the graphic breakdowns with the articles to illustrate points. Super well done.

2nd place

Dan Horn

The Cincinnati Enquirer

3rd place

Tim Botos

The Repository

BEST IN OHIO: NEWS REPORTER (VIDEO)

1st place

Duane Pohlman

WKRC-TV

Judges' comments: Masterful storytelling by Duane. Propulsive storytelling matched with excellent videography. It's clear lots of careful work went into these packages. A joy to watch.

2nd place

Scott Noll

WEWS-TV 5

3rd place

Darrel Rowland

WSYX-TV

BEST IN OHIO: NEWS REPORTER (AUDIO)

1st place

Abbey Marshall

Ideastream

Judges' comments: Expertly narrated stories, told with ample natural sound and vivid interviews. Top-notch audio work!

BEST IN OHIO: COLLEGE NEWSPAPER

1st place

The Carroll News staff

John Carroll University

Judges' comments: Nice mix of campus and local news coverage. Great to see this publication revived!

BEST IN OHIO: COLLEGE WEBSITE

1st place

The Carroll News staff

John Carroll University

BEST IN OHIO: WEBSITE

1st place

Staff

Cincinnati Business Courier

2nd place

Julia Lerner

TheReportingProject.org

3rd place

David Jacobs

Shelby News

BEST IN OHIO: PUBLIC AFFAIRS /NEWS TALK SHOW (AUDIO)

1st place

“Ohio turns deeper red after GOP dominates in 2024 election”

Ideas team

Ideastream

2nd place

"The State of Ohio" - Nov. 29, 2024

Karen Kasler, Daniel Konik, Jo Ingles and Sarah Donaldson

Ohio Public Television

BEST IN OHIO: AUDIO NEWSCAST IN OHIO IN A MAJOR MARKET

1st place

Staff

Ideastream Public Media

Judges' comments: Election newscast provided a variety of perspectives on a busy day. Good variety of stories with a variety of lengths. Could have used a feature kicker at the end.

BEST IN OHIO: VIDEO NEWSCAST IN OHIO IN A MAJOR MARKET

1st place

“Best Newscast: Morning and Daytime”

Andy Fishman, Marc Singer and Jessica Bates

WJW Fox 8

BEST IN OHIO: PRINT PERIODICAL

1st place

Staff

Cleveland Magazine

Judges' comments: The layouts and graphics are exceptional. Loved the eclipse coverage.

2nd place

Don Detore and David Manley

Tire Business Newspaper

3rd place

Staff

Columbus Monthly

BEST IN OHIO: PRINT WEEKLY

1st place

Staff

Cincinnati Business Courier

Judges' comments: Impressed by the quality and depth of the reporting in this business magazine. Stunning design helps bring the content on the page to life.

2nd place

Staff

Columbus Business First

Judges' comments: The cover stories are fine examples of the type of in-depth reporting business magazines often skimp on. Eye catching design makes it a joy to keep turning the page.

3rd place

Staff

Crain's Cleveland Business

Judges' comments: Solid reporting and an impressive amount of content in each issue. Design seems dated relative to competitors.

BEST IN OHIO: PRINT DAILY

1st place

Staff

The Cincinnati Enquirer

Judges' comments: Consistent quality of writing, punchy topics make this a winner.

2nd place

Staff

The Columbus Dispatch

3rd place

Staff

The Chronicle-Telegram

A-MARK PRIZE FOR INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM IN OHIO

1st place

"Vanished"

Danae King, Max Filby and Barbara Perenic

The Columbus Dispatch

Judges' comments: 1) Text book investigative reporting. Nice to see a legacy newspaper devote these kinds of resources to such an important topic. 2) This is really important work that goes beyond traditional work on the topic. The analysis, the storytelling, the accountability and weak efforts by police all add up to something special. 3) Impressive breadth and depth of research, involving a lot of shoe leather. Effective presentation, mixing several personal stories with statistical analysis.

2nd place

"Cincinnati homicide cases unravel after deals with informants"

Dan Horn and Amber Hunt

The Cincinnati Enquirer

Judges' comments: 1) Fantastic work revealing a huge problem within the criminal justice system. 2) An excellent example of holding officials' feet to the fire and not letting them worm out of it with BS explanations"

3rd place

"On the Dark Web: Uncovering the City Hack"

Isabel Cleary

WCMH

Judges' comments 1) Great watchdog reporting that finally got the city to admit that it had covered up the full extent of the hack that exposed hundreds of citizens' private information. Hats off to Isabel Cleary! 2) Through investigation that's expertly reported.