

2019 College Better Newspaper Contest

General Information

Entry Deadline:

11:59 p.m., November 4, 2019

Entries must be uploaded by 11:59 p.m.

2019 MCPA dues must be paid in full

Contest Period:

August 1, 2018 through July 31, 2019

Contest Site: Digital files must be uploaded through the contest site, www.betternewspapercontest.com

Your Password: Contestant managers – If you entered the contest last year you must use your same password. If this is your first time entering the contest your initial password is **bnc**. If **bnc** does not work, it means someone in your organization has already accessed the site and changed your password. *More information is available at betternewspapercontest.com under Help at the top right corner of the home page.*

Help: If you're having trouble with the website click on "Contact BetterBNC" at the top right corner of the page for tutorials or to open a trouble ticket. Call MPA World Headquarters at 517.372.2424 or email bnc@michiganpress.org for questions about the contest or rules.

Presentation of Awards

Judges shall award first, second and third place in all contest categories, with the option of awarding honorable mention if they deem necessary. Judges reserve the right to award fewer or no awards if a category does not have adequate entries with sufficient merit.

An out-of-state press association will judge this contest. Contest results will be announced at the 2020 Michigan Press Association Annual Convention in March. Special awards will be presented to "College Publication of the Year." Certificates will be mailed to the winning newspapers shortly after.



Contest Rules

Who Can Enter:

Any college publication in Michigan that is a member of the Michigan Press Association Collegiate Division (MCPA) is eligible to enter the College Publication Contest.

Entry Fee:

The entry fee is \$1 per entry. These fees are non-refundable. Full payment must accompany your entries or be received at MPA by the contest deadline or your entries will be disqualified. MPA will not invoice for contest fees.

PAYMENT OPTION: When all your entries are complete with all files uploaded, click on the calculate entry fee button under manage entries you'll see a total at the bottom and an option to pay by credit card/PayPal or by check. Payments by credit card show confirmed after the transaction. Checks will be marked paid after receipt. Log back in to check your account before the deadline.

MAILED PAYMENTS SHOULD BE POSTMARKED ON OR BEFORE 11:59 p.m., November 4, 2019 and sent to:

Michigan Press Association
Better Newspaper Contest
827 N. Washington Ave.
Lansing, MI 48906

Deadlines:

Work must have been published between August 1, 2018 through July 31, 2019

*Entries must be uploaded no later than 11:59 p.m., November 4, 2019. **Deadline will not be extended.***

No entry may be submitted in more than one similar category (you can't enter the same story in Feature Story and News Story, for example). THREE entries from each student per category will be accepted.

Divisions:

Division 1..... Newspapers publishing more than weekly – includes digital only

Division 2..... Newspapers publishing weekly

Division 3..... Two-year college publications or newspapers publishing less than weekly

How to Enter

1. Select best issues, story or photo for each competition. Keep in mind criteria for judging and any special rules for the contest category of competition being entered.
2. Entrants may include brief background information on the community or communities they serve, publishing conditions of the newspaper or about the entry itself. Please use the “Comments” area when submitting your entry to convey this to the judges. Communication to the judges must be included with each specific entry, rather than one letter covering all entries.
3. Categories 14–18 marked with ** will be all divisions and do not count toward College Publication of the Year. (See special contests.)

How to submit entries online:

- A. Begin by going to www.betterbnc.com to upload your entries. A “Contestant Manager” widget will guide you through the entry process. If you were the contestant manager last year your login and password have not changed.
- B. If the category you are entering has a limit on the number of entries allowed that category will no longer display in the dropdown menu on the “Submit Entry” page once you’ve reached the limit.
- C. A single uploaded file can be up to 10 megabytes in size. However, it is strongly recommended you compress files to under 5 MB in size, so that judges can quickly view your entries.
- D. Please note that you may change your selection of entries as often as you would like by going back to the “Managing Entries” page before the November 4 deadline.
- E. If submitting full-page pdf files clearly indicate photos and stories to be judged in the comments area.

2019 College Contest Categories

1. News Story

A story providing coverage of a breaking news event or beat that displays accuracy, depth, clarity and impact.

2. Investigative Reporting

Explanatory journalism or in-depth reporting on an issue, produced without tight deadline demands. May be one story, or a series of stories on the same topic.

3. Feature Story

A story or series other than straight news that demonstrates unusual literary excellence, originality and insight from a human interest or other feature perspective.

4. Sports News/Features

A sports story showing enterprise, depth, creativity and impact.

5. Column, Review or Blog, News or Sports

An original account of a news, entertainment or sports issue that demonstrates reporting, logic and clarity, as well as well-defined, articulate positions or arguments.

6. Editorial

An opinion that clearly, logically and definitively explains the newspaper's position on an issue of significance to its readership.

7. Best Writer

Submit three examples best representing a variety of writing styles and subjects. Must be a full-time staff member.

8. Best Photographer

Submit three examples best representing a variety of styles and subjects. Must be a full-time staff member.

9. News-Only Photo

A PDF or URL link of a news photo that shows accuracy, enterprise, depth, clarity and impact.

10. Feature Photo

A PDF or URL link of a feature photo that shows accuracy, enterprise, depth, clarity and impact.

11. Sports Photo

A PDF or URL link of a sports photo that shows accuracy, enterprise, depth, clarity and impact.

12. Front Page Design

An entry is one single page design PDF of the front page ONLY, demonstrating clarity and impact.

13. Non-Front-Page Design

An entry is one single page design PDF demonstrating clarity and impact. This can be a news page, sports page or feature page as long it is not the front page.

****14. Original Cartoon—Editorial or Entertainment**

A cartoon appearing in print or online. Please provide three examples per entry PDFs or via URL links.

****15. Multimedia Reporting**

A single news, sports or feature story that incorporates writing and other multimedia elements published on a newspaper's website. It should display video capture, editing and voice-over skills and/or audio/voiceover techniques. Please provide a URL link to the story and a one-paragraph statement explaining how all the elements were used in print and online.

****16. Single Ad**

An entry is one of three types of advertising: A black and white ad (any size), a spot/full color display ad or an in-house promotional ad. Demonstrates accuracy, clarity and impact.

****17. Special Advertising Section**

A section with or without editorial-supported content. Contest excludes back-to-school, orientation and/or homecoming sections. Submit one product per newspaper.

****18. Online Newspaper**

An entry demonstrates overall excellence in writing, designing and advertising for the Web. Submit three editions, saved as an archive, by supplying URL links and dates. If the archive requires a password, submit it with the entry.

[Special Awards, Contests & Instructions](#)**College Publication of the Year Award**

The College Publication of the Year Award honors the student publication with the most points awarded for placing in contest categories within their division. Only contest categories 1-13 count toward the award.

Points are awarded as follows:

First Place..... 100 points

Second Place..... 70 points

Third Place 40 points

Frequently Asked Questions

What file formats may be used to enter the contest?

If you are not using a URL to link to your entry, the best file format to use is a low-resolution PDF. Please combine multiple PDFs and compress to the recommended size of 5mb or lower. Acceptable file types are PDF, JPG, GIF, and PNG — NO Word files!

What if my information is wrong or my paper is not listed?

Contact bnc@michiganpress.org and your information will be reviewed.

What combination of online and print publications can I use?

With this year's contest, website work can be included with writing entries. Online-only news sources would provide URLs to their entries, but any print newspaper may submit online-only work as well as supplemental digital work that support a printed story. Submit the URL along with the PDF of a story.

Unsure what you can submit from your newspaper's website? For example, if you published a feature story that had one large photograph in the print edition, but an entire gallery of photographs online, can you submit a URL to the story online along with a PDF of what was printed? The answer is YES.... within reason. If the gallery was a large component of your story and readers were directed there (because staff spent significant time editing said gallery), then it is relevant to your story. If it is just a little "something extra," then do not submit the URL to the online gallery. Judges have a LOT to judge and their focus should be on material relevant to the story.

Do I need to send anything to Michigan Press Association World Headquarters?

The entire contest is online only this year. You can even pay online with credit card or PayPal. Please follow payment instructions at BetterNewspaperContest.com.

How can I make my PDF files smaller?

Most newspaper PDFs include high-resolution grayscale or CMYK images for printing. However, PDF contest entries will be viewed and judged on a computer monitor, which displays at low resolution (72-96dpi) in RGB color. Changes in the resolution and color mode of images are the most effective ways to reduce file size without sacrificing quality.

1. Resolution. In PDFs, text is always clear regardless of resolution: resolution relates only to photos and rasterized graphics. Reducing resolution by half reduces image file size by 75%.

The recommended maximum resolution of 96dpi can be enforced by Distiller settings.

2. Color mode. Converting from CMYK to RGB color will reduce image file size by another 25%. This color conversion can again be enforced by Distiller settings.

If you reduce image resolution and/or convert color mode in your entry PDFs with a PDF editor (e.g., Enfocus Pitstop or Quite a Box of Tricks) or use the native profiling/editing tools in Acrobat 6 or later, YOU WILL NOT GAIN THE EXPECTED REDUCTION IN FILE SIZE unless you redistill the PDF afterward.

When will we see the results of the contest?

Contest results will be announced in March 2020 at the Annual Convention. Certificates will be mailed shortly after.

Who can enter the Open Class Contests?

If you are a member college publication and your dues are paid, you can enter.

How do I know what to write in my entry descriptions?

First, know that whatever you write in your entry fields is what the judges will see. We WILL NOT edit what you put there, so if you credit "PeeWee Herman" with writing a story that is who the judges will see. Also, PeeWee will be awarded a certificate, because we will use entry titles and credits to print on awards. Being simple and direct with your descriptions is best. If an entire staff is responsible for an entry, simply write "staff" in the credits.

What if there are several run dates for my one entry?

You must enter a run date. Please enter the earliest date of the entry and the remaining dates in the comment section.

Where can I get more help for anything I can't find here?

Call: 517-372-2424

Email: bnc@michiganpress.org

FYI: You now have access to save your work throughout the year. By creating your own Open Call account, you can utilize the site's new "Contestant Scrapbook" feature and be more prepared when contest time rolls around. Contestants can upload content from their

Scrapbooks directly into an entry. Setting up and using Scrapbooks is easy and intuitive, but if you should have any questions on the uses and features of Scrapbooks, contact the website for more information. Just follow on–screen instructions to set it up.