

2022 MPA Better Newspaper Contest



Statewide Contest Spotlights Quality Journalism

Members of the Colorado Press Association reviewed 200 entries submitted by 9 Michigan News Media members this year. The competition inspires all journalists to produce their best work, which in turn, nurtures stronger communities.

“The annual Michigan Press Association Better Newspaper Contest gives our members a chance each year to assess and put forth their team’s best work in journalism, photojournalism, column writing, graphic design and advertising. After the judges have reviewed the thousands of submissions and made their decisions, awards will be given, bragging rights established and perhaps a few toasts made to the winners. It is a rare moment in our profession where we allow ourselves to reflect and experience something akin to satisfaction for a job well done. Anyone in this business today is in it, not for kudos, but because of a passion and desire to serve our readers, our advertisers and our communities. For us the work is the reward. But on the occasion of MPA BNC contest awards, let’s take a moment to say to all our coworkers and all our colleagues — Good job! And to the winners — Congratulations!”

— Wes Smith, Michigan Press Association President and Group Publisher of View Newspaper Group

The 2022 “News Media Publication of the Year” award is presented to the top News Media publication in the Local and Statewide circulation classes based on points accumulated (100 for first, 70 for second and 40 for third) in all Editorial contest categories. Winners of those awards are listed below.

Circulation Class	News Media Publication
Local	Flint Beat
Statewide	Bridge Michigan

The MPA Rookie Writer Award recognizes exemplary efforts of new writers just breaking into journalism. The three finalists are: Clara Hendrickson of the Detroit Free Press, Yue Stella Yu of Bridge Michigan and Sierra Clark of the Traverse City Record-Eagle, with the award going to **Yue Stella Yu**.

The MPA Public Service Award recognizes a distinguished example of meritorious public service by a newspaper or newspaper individual that has made a significant contribution to the betterment of their community. Winners of this award is listed below based on their circulation Class:
Statewide: Michigan Advance for “Loss, strain and hope mark the next phase of the COVID pandemic”

The 2023 MPA Better Newspaper Contest opens August 1, 2023.

Best Digital Presentation

News Media-Statewide - Best Digital Presentation

3 Entries

First Place

GreatLakesNow.org

Great Lakes Now

Mila Murray, Sandra Svoboda

Second Place

Bridge Michigan

Bridge Michigan

Bridge Staff

Third Place

Michigan Advance

Michigan Advance

Nelle Dunlap, Joe Wright, Susan J. Demas

Best FOIA Story

Open Class - Best FOIA Story

24 Entries

First Place

Grand Rapids Press

Michigan businesses pushed for, and were allowed to sell contaminated weed, public records reveal

Gus Burns

Second Place

Traverse City Record-Eagle

PFAS

Sheri McWhirter, Jordan Travis

Third Place

Detroit News

Sheriff's investigators used 'scare tactics' to grill Michigan clerks on election

Craig Mauger

Honorable Mention

Michigan Advance

Kent Co. health director tells commissioners after almost being run off the road: 'I need help'

Anna Gustafson

Best Opinion

News Media-Local - Best Opinion

1 Entries

First Place

Glen Arbor Sun Newspaper

Reduced access to abortions, reduced access to freedom

Mae Stier

News Media-Statewide - Best Opinion

4 Entries

First Place

Michigan Advance

Rick Haglund

Second Place

Michigan Advance

Susan J. Demas

Third Place

Gander Newsroom

Linking the Past and Future of My City (and Yours, Too) Through Cycling Spaces

Isaac Constans

Honorable Mention

MIRS

Unwittingly, media outlets aid redistricting plan opponents

Kyle Melinn

Best Page or Pages Design

News Media-Statewide - Best Page or Pages Design

2 Entries

First Place

Michigan Advance

White nationalism resurgence continues to shift and shape Michigan, U.S. politics

Laina G. Stebbins, Susan J. Demas

Second Place

Michigan Advance

'We're still here': Indigenous water protectors call for Enbridge to respect treaty rights

Laina G. Stebbins, Susan J. Demas

Best Podcast

Open Class - Best Podcast

6 Entries

First Place

Detroit Free Press

The Detroit Free Press weekly podcast "On The Line"

Cary Junior II, Darcie Moran, Tad Davis, Maryann Struman, Anjanette Delgado

Second Place

Grand Rapids Press

Michigan Crime Stories: Pinconning Paralyzer

Jessica Shepherd, Gus Burns

Third Place

Michigan Information and Research Services, Inc.

MIRS Monday

Kyle Melinn

Best Publication Design

News Media-Statewide - Best Publication Design

1 Entries

First Place

Michigan Advance

Michigan Advance

Nelle Dunlap, Joe Wright, Susan J. Demas

Best Video Presentation

News Media-Local - Best Video Presentation

3 Entries

First Place

Flint Beat

Flint Soap Box Derby is back

Michael Indriolo

Second Place

Flint Beat

Music store marks 40th year on north side

Jamal Bransford, Jiquanda Johnson, Kate Stockrahm

Third Place

Flint Beat

Flint 360: The Flint Public Library reopens after a multi-million-dollar renovation

Andrew Roth

News Media-Statewide - Best Video Presentation

5 Entries

First Place

GreatLakesNow.org

Ice Boating

Rob Green, Jordan Wingrove, Ward Detwiler, Sandy McPhee, Noah Mendez, Will Hughes

Second Place

GreatLakesNow.org

Love for a Lighthouse

Staff

Third Place

GreatLakesNow.org

Lake Surfistas

Staff

Honorable Mention

GreatLakesNow.org

Superior Blooms

Dan Kraker, Bill Allesee, Derek Montgomery, Rob Green, Jordan Wingrove

Best Writing

Open Class - Best Writing

27 Entries

First Place

John Carlisle

Second Place

Georgea Kovanis

Third Place

Finding Peace During War

Chris Killian, Ben Lando

Honorable Mention

'I want justice. That's what I need.'

Chris Killian

Detroit Free Press

Detroit Free Press

NowKalamazoo

NowKalamazoo

Business/Agriculture News

News Media-Local - Business/Agriculture News

8 Entries

First Place

Flint's own: Music Planet celebrates 40 years

Kate Stockrahm

Second Place

A passage to India, here in Lake Leelanau

Susan Ager

Third Place

What heat waves, frost, drought and torrential rain mean for our cherry orchards

Madeleine Vedel

Honorable Mention

Goats feast at Port Oneida Rural Historic District

Jacob Wheeler

Glen Arbor Sun Newspaper

Glen Arbor Sun Newspaper

Glen Arbor Sun Newspaper

Flint Beat

News Media-Statewide - Business/Agriculture News

14 Entries

First Place

Rising wages, few workers: A small town in Michigan adjusts to the new economy

Paula Gardner, Mike Wilkinson

Second Place

Up North businesses are buying housing just to lure summer staff

Paula Gardner

Third Place

After two weeks and 1,100 evacuations, mishap tests Flat Rock's loyalty to Ford

Kelly House, Paula Gardner

Honorable Mention

As snow and ice disappear with climate change, some Michigan businesses struggle

Marla R. Miller

Bridge Michigan

Bridge Michigan

Bridge Michigan

Michigan Advance

Feature Photo

News Media-Local - Feature Photo

3 Entries

First Place

Flint After Dark: The city's nightlife shows just how diverse the community is

KT Kanazawich

Second Place

Beyond the Bricks: A photo tour of Saginaw Street

KT Kanazawich

Flint Beat

Flint Beat

Third Place

A tour of the North Manitou Shoal Light Station

Mae Stier

Glen Arbor Sun Newspaper

News Media-Statewide - Feature Photo

9 Entries

First Place

Isle Royale

Kelly House

Second Place

Michigan Pride after the fall of Roe

Andrew Roth

Third Place

Tatiana Degai and Aleksandr Mokryi of Kamchatka perform a traditional Siberian dance at the 'Heart of the Turtle' international Indigenous gathering

Laina G. Stebbins

Honorable Mention

Carlota Almanza-Lumpkin mourns Tuskegee Airman Alexander Jefferson in Detroit

Ken Coleman

Bridge Michigan

Michigan Advance

Michigan Advance

Michigan Advance

Feature Story

News Media-Local - Feature Story

12 Entries

First Place

Finding Peace During War

Chris Killian, Ben Lando

Second Place

Meet the French-speaking hula hooper cleaning up Flint's east side

Santiago Ochoa

Third Place

From policing to pizza: How one Flint woman continues to serve her community after giving up the badge

Amy Diaz

Honorable Mention

Looking for God's Infinite Plan in the Footprints of Wolves

Kathleen Stocking

NowKalamazoo

Flint Beat

Flint Beat

Glen Arbor Sun Newspaper

News Media-Statewide - Feature Story

17 Entries

First Place

Lake Erie's once-thriving blue pike is long gone but never forgotten

James Proffitt

Second Place

They disagreed, but both caught hell. Welcome to Michigan's mask mandate wars

Ron French

Third Place

Lake Superior Summer: Blue-green algal blooms come to a lake once believed immune

Sharon Oosthoek

Honorable Mention

On Isle Royale, fate of summer cabins pits nature against family history

Kelly House

GreatLakesNow.org

Bridge Michigan

GreatLakesNow.org

Bridge Michigan

Government/Education News

News Media-Local - Government/Education News

5 Entries

First Place *Flint Beat*

Flint City Council members 'smell a rat' after investigative hearing is 'blocked' again

Amy Diaz

Second Place *Flint Beat*

Flint, Beecher schools among highest discipline rates for homeless students in Michigan

Carmen Nesbitt

Third Place *Glen Arbor Sun Newspaper*

Solving Leelanau's Child Care Crisis: Early Childhood Development Commission launches innovative home-based business model

Jacob Wheeler

News Media-Statewide - Government/Education News

21 Entries

First Place *Michigan Advance*

In Benton Harbor's water crisis, a long history of systemic racism - and a chance for justice

Anna Gustafson

Second Place *Bridge Michigan*

Bloody drawings, a cry for help and Oxford's choice before school shooting

Ron French, Kelly House

Third Place *Michigan Advance*

'What was left behind was a broken family'

Anna Gustafson

Honorable Mention *Michigan Advance*

'Kids know we are putting them at risk for political reasons'

Anna Gustafson

News Enterprise Reporting

News Media-Local - News Enterprise Reporting

News Media-Local Entries

First Place *Flint Beat*

'In our hearts forever': One family's story in the aftermath of Flint's rise in gun violence

Kate Stockrahm

Second Place *Flint Beat*

Flint's mobile COVID-19 vaccine unit scours neighborhoods to find the hard-to-reach and hesitant

Carmen Nesbitt

Third Place *NowKalamazoo*

Falsehoods fuel fear underscoring Kalamazoo GOP's election strategy

Ben Lando, Dave Person

Honorable Mention *Flint Beat*

When race data goes missing, how do health leaders combat COVID racial disparities in Flint?

Carmen Nesbitt

News Media-Statewide - News Enterprise Reporting

21 Entries

First Place *Bridge Michigan*

Lee Chatfield sexual allegations

Kelly House, Jonathan Oosting

Second Place

The \$6 billion question

Koby Levin, Isabel Lohman, Tracie Mauriello, Ethan Bakuli

Third Place *Michigan Advance*

In Benton Harbor's water crisis, a long history of systemic racism - and a chance for justice

Anna Gustafson

Honorable Mention *Chalkbeat*

Many Michigan districts have staffing and supply problems. What is being done about it?

Tracie Mauriello

News Photo

News Media-Statewide - News Photo

9 Entries

First Place *Michigan Advance*

Patrick Lyoya's mother, Dorcas Lyoya, weeps as they leave his funeral

Allison R. Donahue

Second Place *Michigan Advance*

"Abortion is human rights"

Andrew Roth

Third Place *Bridge Michigan*

Michigan nursing home staff shortage raises peril, adds to hospital woes

Elaine Cromie

Honorable Mention *Michigan Advance*

Ryan Kelley takes a moment at a GOP gubernatorial debate, a month before his arrest over the Jan. 6 riot

Andrew Roth

Public Service Award

News Media-Statewide - Public Service Award

2 Entries

First Place *Michigan Advance*

Loss, strain and hope mark the next phase of the COVID pandemic

Anna Gustafson, Susan J. Demas, Ken Coleman, Allison R.

Donahue, Laina G. Stebbins

Second Place *Bridge Michigan*

Lee Chatfield investigation

Kelly House, Jonathan Oosting, Sergio Martinez-Beltran

Rookie Writer

Open Class - Rookie Writer

11 Entries

First Place *Bridge Michigan*

Yue Stella Yu

Second Place *Detroit Free Press*

Clara Hendrickson

Third Place *Traverse City Record-Eagle*

Sierra Clark

Honorable Mention *Grand Rapids Press*

Melissa Frick

Special Section

News Media-Statewide - Special Section

2 Entries

First Place *Michigan Advance*

Election 2022

Nelle Dunlap, Joe Wright, Mary-Kate Murphy, Susan J. Demas

Second Place *GreatLakesNow.org*

Water's True Cost

Great Lakes News Collaborative

Sports Writing

News Media-Statewide - Sports Writing

5 Entries

First Place *Bridge Michigan*

How polo is changing the soul of an Up North Michigan village

Ron French

Second Place *Bridge Michigan*

Trans teens: We need to be heard, counted. In Michigan, the

backlash is harsh

Zahra Ahmad

Third Place *Bridge Michigan*

In cheering Taylor North's baseball success, a town celebrates its

own

Robin Erb

Honorable Mention *Michigan Advance*

Racist taunt in Fowlerville is another in a series involving Michigan

high school athletics

Jon King

Spot News Story

News Media-Local - Spot News Story

2 Entries

First Place *Flint Beat*

Explosion heard for miles, house catches fire on Flint's west side

Amy Diaz

Second Place *Flint Beat*

Downtown Flint's Paterson Building is condemned

Kate Stockrahm

News Media-Statewide - Spot News Story

14 Entries

First Place *Bridge Michigan*

Abortion decision leaked - what it could mean to Michigan

Bridge Staff

Second Place *Bridge Michigan*

Oxford High School shooting

Paula Gardner, Jonathan Oosting, Mike Wilkinson, Ron French, Kelly

House

Third Place *Bridge Michigan*

Republicans add transgender athlete ban to Michigan education

budget bill

Isabel Lohman, Tracie Mauriello

Honorable Mention *Bridge Michigan*

New districts give Democrats chance to flip Michigan Legislature

Sergio Martinez-Beltran