



Exceptional Journalism Honored in 2025 College Better Newspaper Contest

Members of the Alabama Press Association reviewed 548 entries submitted by 17 Michigan college newspapers this year and selected three college newspapers for creating great journalism.

The 2025 “College Newspaper of the Year” award is presented to the top college newspapers in three divisions based on points accumulated (100 for first, 70 for second and 40 for third) in all editorial contest categories (categories 1-13). The winners of those awards are:

Division	College Newspaper
Division 1	Michigan State University/The State News
Division 2	Albion College/The Pleiad
Division 3	Henry Ford Community College/Mirror News

Division 1 - Newspapers publishing more than weekly.

Division 2 - Newspapers publishing weekly.

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

“Student journalists are journalists — period. Across Michigan, college students provide impactful journalism that informs, enlightens and engages communities and that holds power to account. It’s only right to support this essential work, through recognition in the Better Newspaper Contest and from professionals in the field.” Said Todd Fettig, student advisor at Grand Valley Lanthorn

The 2026 MPA/MCPA College Newspaper Contest opens August 1, 2026.

Class 18 - News Story

Division 1 - Class 18 - News Story

32 Entries

1st Place **University of Michigan/
The Michigan Daily**

With all eyes on Michigan, Ann Arbor takes on Election Day

Staff

2nd Place **Michigan State University/
The State News**

Misconduct cases undercut MSU Police's 'trauma-informed' efforts

Theo Scheer

3rd Place **Michigan State University/
The State News**

MSU 'exonerated' a dean accused of plagiarism. How would a student facing the same claims fare?

Owen McCarthy

Honorable Mention **Michigan State University/
The State News**

'Regression' at every level: How the Big Beautiful Bill hits MSU

Somer Sodeman

Division 2 - Class 18 - News Story

34 Entries

1st Place **Grand Valley State University/
Grand Valley Lanthorn**

Religious artwork causes controversy at GV

Joseph Poulos

2nd Place **Hillsdale College/ The Collegian**

Trump reclaims the White House

Jillian Parks, Isaac Green, Moira Gleason

3rd Place **Calvin University/ Chimes**

Calvin responds to a national wave of visa revocations, status terminations

Grace Buller

Honorable Mention **Hillsdale College/ The Collegian**

Community Thrift, Camp Hope could close as debt looms

Isabella Doer

Division 3 - Class 18 - News Story

17 Entries

1st Place **Grand Rapids Community
College/Collegiate**

Using AI changes your brain— and it might be ruining everything

Marc Stoufer III

2nd Place **Henry Ford Community
College/ Mirror News**

MENA Students Reflect on Crises in Gaza and Lebanon

Ashley Davis

3rd Place **Lansing Community College/
The Lookout**

College sets new goals with 2025-2027 strategic plan

Sophia Potter

Honorable Mention **Schoolcraft College/
The Connection**

Culinary Shining Star

Jess Michael

Class 19 - Investigative Reporting

Division 1 - Class 19 - Investigative Reporting

9 Entries

1st Place **Michigan State University/
The State News**

MSU Feds investigate Olin assault allegations

Alex Walters

2nd Place **Michigan State University/
Capital News Service**

Forever chemicals in biosolids may pose problems for municipalities, farmers

Ruth Thornton

3rd Place **Michigan State University/
The State News**

Campus cops face a persistent problem: Victims don't want to work with them

Alex Walters

Honorable Mention **University of Michigan/
The Michigan Daily**

Former SMTD professor alleges provost's misconduct throughout his tenure review

Amer Goel

Division 2 - Class 19 - Investigative Reporting

22 Entries

1st Place **Calvin University/ Chimes**

The Faculty Gender Divide at Calvin: A Complex Picture

Elisabeth Stevens

2nd Place **Albion College/ The Pleiad**

Albion College Dissolves French, German Programs, Professor Says 'It Is a Discredit to Education'

Bella Bakeman, Jocelyn Kincaid-Beal

3rd Place **Hillsdale College/ The Collegian**

Overcrowded county jail releases inmates early

Catherine Maxwell

Honorable Mention **Grand Valley State University/
Grand Valley Lanthorn**

High FOIA cost contributes to dropping of GV student's Title IX case

Olivia Mulka, Emma Armijo

Division 3 - Class 19 - Investigative Reporting

8 Entries

1st Place **Grand Rapids Community
College/ Collegiate**

Top athletic department staff disciplined after physical altercation

Collegiate Staff

2nd Place **Henry Ford Community
College/ Mirror News**

Problems with Patient Care at Michigan's Psychiatric Hospitals

Alaina Schnell

3rd Place **Grand Rapids Community
College/ Collegiate**

GRCC President Charles Lepper placed on paid administrative leave

Alexa Cheaney, Vanessa Hewitt and staff

Honorable Mention **Monroe County Community
College/ The Agora**

No formal sealed bid process for H Building renovations

Reese Bowling

Class 20 - Feature Story

Division 1 - Class 20 - Feature Story

22 Entries

1st Place **University of Michigan/
The Michigan Daily**

I immersed myself in furry culture. You don't understand them.

Liam Rappleye

2nd Place **Michigan State University/
The State News**

MSU Public Defenders Clinic takes unique approach to educating law students

Anish Topiwala

3rd Place **Michigan State University/
The State News**

A week at MSU, by the numbers

Theo Scheer

Honorable Mention **Michigan State University/
Capital News Service**

New lawmakers learn from their journalism experiences

Anna Rossow

Division 2 - Class 20 - Feature Story

30 Entries

1st Place **Albion College/ The Pleiad**

Redefining Gender, Reshaping Minds: The History of WGSS at Albion

Killian Altayeb

2nd Place **Hillsdale College/ The Collegian**

Jewish students find 'mishpacha' in club

Maggie O'Connor

3rd Place **Albion College/ The Pleiad**

'Everybody Loved Bob and Bob Loved Everybody': A 106-Year-Old's Legacy

Jocelyn Kincaid-Beal

Honorable Mention **Western Michigan University/
The Western Herald**

Students share their post-election feelings

Jack Mennicke

Division 3 - Class 20 - Feature Story

26 Entries

1st Place **Grand Rapids Community
College/ Collegiate**

'Do not go gentle into that good night:' Transgender peers at GRCC

Speak up and speak out

Juliette Bolle-Leon

2nd Place **Grand Rapids Community
College/ Collegiate**

Meet the GRCC brothers with 50,000 records

Alexa Cheaney

3rd Place **Henry Ford Community
College/ Mirror News**

Kevin Can!: Different Can Be Fun

Toria Legris

Class 21 - Sports News/Features

Division 1 - Class 21 - Sports News/Features

10 Entries

1st Place **University of Michigan/
The Michigan Daily**

From the farm to the football field, Colston Loveland stays humble by leaning on Idaho roots

Rekha Leonard

2nd Place **Michigan State University/
The State News**

In portal era, Jaden Akins stayed — and helped restore MSU's title standard

Thomas Cobb

3rd Place **Michigan State University/
The State News**

MSU-Michigan men's basketball rivalry reignites with Big Ten race on the line

Thomas Cobb

Honorable Mention **Michigan State University/
The State News**

MSU's journey back to Atlanta shows how far its come — and can still go

Thomas Cobb

Division 2 - Class 21 - Sports News/Features

20 Entries

1st Place **Albion College/ The Pleiad**

Breaking Bats and Barriers: Michigan's Black Baseball History

Bella Fabrizio

2nd Place **Grand Valley State University/
Grand Valley Lanthorn**

First women's wrestling team at GV debuts talent in opening tournament

Max Bufkin

3rd Place **Hillsdale College/ The Collegian**

Coach Ken: Pro ref to women's soccer coach

Ty Ruddy

Honorable Mention **Albion College/ The Pleiad**

Looking Back on the '94 Championship: 'No One Wanted Credit, We All Just Wanted To Win'

Aidan Shapiro

Division 3 - Class 21 - Sports News/Features

12 Entries

1st Place **Henry Ford Community
College/ Mirror News**

Detroit's Jim Dandy Ski Club

Ashley Davis

2nd Place **Schoolcraft College/ The Connection**

The Heart of a Runner

Jess Michael

3rd Place **Henry Ford Community
College/ Mirror News**

Teams Give Back at Annual Hunger Games at HFC

Zayneb Ardaini

Honorable Mention **Grand Rapids Community
College/ Collegiate**

Player Profile: Marshaun Flakes and his journey to becoming a school record holder

Jack Walker

Class 22 - Column, Review or Blog, News

Division 1 - Class 22 - Column, Review or Blog, News

9 Entries

1st Place **Michigan State University/
Great Lakes Echo**

Book gathers historic accounts of Michigan cougar encounters

Anna Barnes

2nd Place **Michigan State University/
The State News**

COLUMN: Being an international student when everything feels uncertain

Satvik Shubham

3rd Place **Eastern Michigan University/
Eastern Echo**

EMU Theatre and the audience unite for the queer joy of 'The Rocky Horror Show'

Frank Remski

Honorable Mention **Michigan State University/
Great Lakes Echo**

Picnics and Porcupines: Book explores history of eating outside in the U.P.

Isabella Figueroa

Division 2 - Class 22 - Column, Review or Blog, News

26 Entries

1st Place **Albion College/ The Pleiad**

Opinion: Young Voters Matter, Reflecting on the Coy James

American History Lecture

Bella Bakeman

2nd Place **Calvin University/ Chimes**

A Continuation of "a dialogue about art and AI"

Chantale Van Tassel

3rd Place **Albion College/ The Pleiad**

Doing Hard Things: Advocating for Trigger Warnings in the Classroom

Jocelyn Kincaid-Beal

Honorable Mention **Albion College/ The Pleiad**

Opinion: Why Toni Morrison's Works Should be Read, Re-Read;

Celebrated

Sophia Valchine

Division 3 - Class 22 - Column, Review or Blog, News

21 Entries

1st Place **Schoolcraft College/ The Connection**

Pranked for the Prize

Izabella Allie

2nd Place **Schoolcraft College/ The Connection**

Open heart, open mind

Jess Michael

3rd Place **Grand Rapids Community
College/ Collegiate**

Are we okay?

Marc Stoufer III

Honorable Mention **Henry Ford Community
College/ Mirror News**

Tweenage Wasteland: Why Young Girls are Missing Out on This

Vital Awkward Stage

Inaam Makki

Class 23 - Column, Review or Blog, Sports

Division 1 - Class 23 - Column, Review or Blog, Sports

4 Entries

1st Place **Michigan State University/
The State News**

COLUMN: The extinction of the four-year, one-university athlete

Kaspar Haehnle

2nd Place **Michigan State University/
The State News**

Five MSU victories that define Izzo's journey to Big Ten wins record

Thomas Cobb

3rd Place **University of Michigan/
The Michigan Daily**

Charlie Pappalardo: Sherrone Moore has figured out how to drag opponents into the mud

Charlie Pappalardo

Honorable Mention **Michigan State University/
The State News**

COLUMN: Oh captain, bye captain — The toll of losing Red Savage

Kaspar Haehnle

Division 2 - Class 23 - Column, Review or Blog, Sports

6 Entries

1st Place **Western Michigan University/
The Western Herald**

Opinion: The state of Western Michigan Athletics

Joseph Hartzell

2nd Place **Albion College/ The Pleiad**

Opinion: Nepotism Will be the Downfall of the NFL

Seiji McSwain

3rd Place **Albion College/ The Pleiad**

Opinion: You're More Than a Student-Athlete

Bella Fabrizio

Honorable Mention **Albion College/ The Pleiad**

Opinion: Sports Gambling Through the Eyes of a Student-Athlete

Aidan Shapiro

Division 3 - Class 23 - Column, Review or Blog, Sports

3 Entries

1st Place **Henry Ford Community
College/ Mirror News**

Rediscovering the Natural Beauty of Michigan: A Late Bloomers

Guide to Camping and Hiking

Ashley Davis

2nd Place **Grand Rapids Community
College/ Collegiate**

Lions defense crumbles in shocking 45-31 loss to Commanders

Jack Walker

3rd Place **Henry Ford Community
College/ Mirror News**

Title IX and Giving Woman Athletes Fair Treatment

Renata Diaz

Class 24 - Editorial

Division 1 - Class 24 - Editorial

4 Entries

1st Place **Michigan State University/
The State News**

EDITORIAL: Trustee candidates lack concrete ideas, oblivious to real issues at MSU

Staff

2nd Place **Michigan State University/
The State News**

EDITORIAL: International students deserve certainty

Staff

3rd Place **University of Michigan/
The Michigan Daily**

From The Daily: Three questions for our future

The Michigan Daily Editorial Board

Division 2 - Class 24 - Editorial

8 Entries

1st Place **Hillsdale College/ The Collegian**

Collegian Weekly: Never forget, even if you can't remember

Staff

2nd Place **Hillsdale College/ The Collegian**

Collegian Weekly: What happened to 'agree to disagree'?

Moira Gleason

3rd Place **Hillsdale College/ The Collegian**

Collegian Weekly: Wednesday will be another normal day

Jacob Beckwith

Honorable Mention **Grand Valley State University/
Grand Valley Lanthorn**

Predictions and pipe dreams: Our take on the 2025 Grammy nominations

Staff

Division 3 - Class 24 - Editorial

10 Entries

1st Place **Monroe County Community
College/ The Agora**

Safety concerns on campus erase sense of security

Maggie Sandefur, Mick Valentino

2nd Place **Washtenaw Community College/
The Voice**

Editorial: The Voice isn't going to save the world, but we're here to listen

The Washtenaw Voice Editorial Staff

3rd Place **Henry Ford Community
College/ Mirror News**

Celebrity Endorsements of Political Candidates

The Mirror News

Honorable Mention **Schoolcraft College/
The Connection**

Welcome back students

Connection Staff

Class 25 - Best Writer

Division 1 - Class 25 - Best Writer

5 Entries

1st Place **Michigan State University/
The State News**

Alex Walters

2nd Place

**Eastern Michigan University/
Eastern Echo**

Elena Davis

3rd Place **Michigan State University/
The State News**

Theo Scheer

Division 2 - Class 25 - Best Writer

12 Entries

1st Place **Hillsdale College/ The Collegian**

Thomas McKenna

2nd Place **Hillsdale College/ The Collegian**

Moira Gleason

3rd Place **Albion College/ The Pleiad**

Bella Fabrizio

Honorable Mention **Albion College/ The Pleiad**

Killian Altayeb

Division 3 - Class 25 - Best Writer

5 Entries

1st Place **Grand Rapids Community
College/ Collegiate**

Alexa Cheaney

2nd Place **Henry Ford Community
College/ Mirror News**

Ashley Davis

3rd Place **Grand Rapids Community
College/ Collegiate**

Marc Stoufer III

Honorable Mention **Washtenaw Community College/
The Voice**

Lily Cole

Class 26 - Feature Photo

Division 1 - Class 26 - Feature Photo

6 Entries

1st Place **Michigan State University/
The State News**

Flowers at Spartan Statue

Campbell Berg

2nd Place **Michigan State University/
The State News**

Work

Finn Gomez

3rd Place **University of Michigan/
The Michigan Daily**

Lollapalooza

Grace Lahti

Division 2 - Class 26 - Feature Photo

13 Entries

1st Place **Central Michigan University/
CM-Life**

Sunset Bull Ride

Mark Hoover

2nd Place **Grand Valley State University/
Grand Valley Lanthorn**

Students dance the night away at GV Presidents' Ball

Risho Wooten

3rd Place **Grand Valley State University/
Grand Valley Lanthorn**

Grand Rapids Woodstock Fest supports family in Gaza
Caleb Worpel

Honorable Mention **Central Michigan University/
CM-Life**

The MOVE! for Health Class
Jo Kenoshmeg

Division 3 - Class 26 - Feature Photo

14 Entries

1st Place **Monroe County Community
College/ The Agora**

New art instructor hired at MCCC
Mick Valentino

2nd Place **Henry Ford Community
College/ Mirror News**

*"Kevin Can" author Ian Flanagan and graphic illustrator Jesse
Lindlbauer*

Toria Legris

3rd Place **Henry Ford Community
College/ Mirror News**

Olivia Draus duckpin bowling at Corktown Taphouse, Detroit, MI.
Emily Kunzelman

Class 27 - Front Page Design

Division 1 - Class 27 - Front Page Design

7 Entries

1st Place **Michigan State University/
The State News**

TSN March Madness Cover
Zachary Balcoff

2nd Place **University of Michigan/
The Michigan Daily**

Front Page - 4/2/2025

Leyla Dumke

3rd Place **Eastern Michigan University/
Eastern Echo**

Election Day

Ameera Salman and Rylee Curley

Division 2 - Class 27 - Front Page Design

9 Entries

1st Place **Albion College/ The Pleiad**

Pleiad Print Edition: February 14, 2025 (Front page)

Bella Bakeman, Bonnie Lord, Killian Altayeb

2nd Place **Hillsdale College/ The Collegian**

Jan. 22, 2025 A1

Catherine Maxwell

3rd Place **Central Michigan University/ CM-Life**

May 5 Central Michigan Life Burning the bottom line

Jo Kenoshmeg, Zoey Lawrence

Honorable Mention **Albion College/ The Pleiad**

Pleiad Print Edition: April 21, 2025 (Front page)

Bonnie Lord, Bella Bakeman

Division 3 - Class 27 - Front Page Design

12 Entries

1st Place **Washtenaw Community College/
The Voice**

Washtenaw Voice A1 04152025

The Washtenaw Voice Staff

2nd Place **Grand Rapids Community
College/ Collegiate**

Collegiate Magazine Winter 2025
Dana Kistler

3rd Place **Henry Ford Community
College/ Mirror News**

*MENA Students Reflect on the Crises in Gaza and Lebanon cover
design*

Olivia Draus

Class 28 - Non-Front Page Design

Division 1 - Class 28 - Non-Front Page Design

9 Entries

1st Place **Michigan State University/
The State News**

TSN Gen Z Votes Page

Zachary Balcoff

2nd Place **University of Michigan/
The Michigan Daily**

Middle Spread - 4/2/2025

Leyla Dumke, Maisie Derlega

3rd Place **Michigan State University/
The State News**

TSN MSU Gymnastics Page

Zachary Balcoff

Division 2 - Class 28 - Non-Front Page Design

4 Entries

1st Place **Albion College/ The Pleiad**

Pleiad Print Edition: April 21, 2025 (Back page)

Bonnie Lord, Bella Bakeman

2nd Place **Albion College/ The Pleiad**

Pleiad Print Edition: February 14, 2025 (Back page)

Bella Bakeman, Bonnie Lord, Killian Altayeb

3rd Place **Central Michigan University/ CM-Life**

The Science of Love

Paige Jackowski, Ben Westerhof

Honorable Mention **Hillsdale College/ The Collegian**

Opinions Page - Sept. 19

Caroline Kurt

Division 3 - Class 28 - Non-Front Page Design

11 Entries

1st Place **Henry Ford Community
College/ Mirror News**

Bitten by the Modern-Day Nosferatu page design

Olivia Draus

2nd Place **Schoolcraft College/ The Connection**

Unexpected Perspective

Pili Estevez

3rd Place **Henry Ford Community
College/ Mirror News**

Title IX and Giving Women Athletes Fair Treatment page design

DJ Harshaw-Minley

Honorable Mention **Washtenaw Community
College/ The Voice**

Washtenaw Voice B1 111924

Jada Hauser

Class 29 - Best News-Only Photo

Open - Class 29 - Best News-Only Photo

22 Entries

1st Place *Grand Rapids Community College/ Collegiate*

'We're not going back:' Thousands gather... for International

Women's Day march

Vanessa Hewitt

2nd Place *Michigan State University/*

The State News

No Kings, No Tyrants

Finn Gomez

3rd Place *Michigan State University/ The State News*

Protest

Finn Gomez

Honorable Mention *Schoolcraft College/ The Connection*

I did it!

Cam Weller

Class 30 - Best Sports Photo

Open - Class 30 - Best Sports Photo

29 Entries

1st Place *Central Michigan University/ CM-Life*

Bareback Competition

Mark Hoover

2nd Place *Grand Valley State University/*

Grand Valley Lanthorn

GV swim and dive breaks pool record on senior night

Macayla Cramer

3rd Place *Central Michigan University/ CM-Life*

CMU vs. Bowling Green basketball

Mark Hoover

Honorable Mention *Michigan State University/*

The State News

Spartan tennis

Fatih Imamoglu

Class 31 - Best Photographer

Open - Class 31 - Best Photographer

13 Entries

1st Place *Central Michigan University/ CM-Life*

Mark Hoover

2nd Place *Grand Rapids Community College/ Collegiate*

Vanessa Hewitt

3rd Place *Michigan State University/ The State News*

Finn Gomez

Honorable Mention *Albion College/ The Pleiad*

Oghenefejiro Nakireru

Class 32 - Original Cartoon - Editorial or Entertainment

Open - Class 32 - Original Cartoon - Editorial or Entertainment

14 Entries

1st Place *Eastern Michigan University/ Eastern Echo*

Burnout

AJ Grams

2nd Place *Eastern Michigan University/ Eastern Echo*

Virgin vs Chad | Guess Who | Slacking not Lacking

Rylee Curley

3rd Place *Albion College/ The Pleiad*

Original Cartoon-- Bonnie Lord

Bonnie Lord

Honorable Mention *Grand Rapids Community College/ Collegiate*

Well, why would I check the news?

Alexa Cheaney and Dana Kistler

Class 33 - Multimedia Reporting

Open - Class 33 - Multimedia Reporting

12 Entries

1st Place *Henry Ford Community College/ Mirror News*

Problems with Patient Care at Michigan's Psychiatric Hospitals

Alaina Schnell

2nd Place *Grand Rapids Community College/ Collegiate*

'We're not going back:' Thousands gather... for International

Women's Day march

Collegiate Staff

3rd Place *Michigan State University/ The State News*

MSU Surplus Store

Alexis Schmidt, Brianna Schmidt

Honorable Mention *Grand Rapids Community College/ Collegiate*

How a team of artists transformed Grand Rapids into a living museum

Marc Stoufer III

Class 34 - Single Ad

Division 1 - Class 34 - Single Ad

1 Entries

1st Place *Michigan State University/ The State News*

State News house ad

Zachary Balcoff

Division 2 - Class 34 - Single Ad

1 Entries

1st Place *Central Michigan University/ CM-Life*

Covering What Matters At CMU Since 1919

Brittany Stevens

Division 3 - Class 34 - Single Ad

4 Entries

1st Place *Schoolcraft College/
The Connection*

Men's Hockey Schedule

Pili Estevez

2nd Place *Henry Ford Community
College/ Mirror News*

Welcome Back Days

Olivia Draus

3rd Place *Henry Ford Community
College/ Mirror News*

Career Expo

DJ Harshaw-Minley

Honorable Mention *Henry Ford Community
College/ Mirror News*

Art Speaks

Alejandro Bueno

Class 35 - Special Advertising Section

Open - Class 35 - Special Advertising Section

5 Entries

1st Place *Central Michigan University/ CM-Life*

2024 Election Issue

Staff

2nd Place *Henry Ford Community
College/ Mirror News*

Campus Safety Tips

Madison Gafford

3rd Place *Central Michigan University/ CM-Life*

Best of Central Michigan 24

Staff

Honorable Mention *Henry Ford
Community College/ Mirror News*

Writing Center

Yasmine Elhagehassan

Class 36 - Online Newspaper

Open - Class 36 - Online Newspaper

7 Entries

1st Place *Central Michigan University/ CM-Life*

March 2025, April 2025, May 2025

Staff

2nd Place *Michigan State University/
The State News*

The State News online newspaper entry

Staff

3rd Place *Schoolcraft College/ The Connection*

Online Newspaper

Connection Staff

Honorable Mention *Albion College/ The Pleiad*

The Albion Pleiad for Best Online Newspaper

The Albion Pleiad Staff