

# MARK OF EXCELLENCE AWARDS

*Guidebook for Regional Directors and Regional MOE Chairs  
2012-2013*



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Important points from Guy Baehr:

- The MOE contest attracts almost three times as many entries as the Sigma Delta Chi Awards competition and produces some 25 times more individual awards, in part because winners are selected not only nationally, but also in all 12 regions.
- As part of the effort to both improve this signature SPJ contest and make it more manageable, the Board of Directors created a new position, Regional MOE Awards Chair, to help run the contest in each region.
- The primary duties of the MOE chairs are to recruit well-qualified judges within each region; carry out required regional administrative tasks in cooperation with headquarters, help organize the regional MOE award ceremony and assist the Regional Director in presenting the award certificates. Regional Directors retain ultimate responsibility for conducting the MOE contest in their region. The regional chairs are responsible for promoting the MOE contest to campus journalism programs, journalism advisers, campus editors and station directors and student journalists in general within their region. National headquarters promotes the contest nationally with a mailing that goes out to over 8,000 students and advisers. The contest is also promoted through news releases and ads in Quill.
- The aim of this guide is to make the job easier for you by clarifying how the MOE competition operates and what you need to do to make it work smoothly in your region. *(PLEASE NOTE: Even though you may have been through this last year, you should review this guide again because some deadlines and procedures have been changed or added.)*

Please take time to review all of the deadlines and procedures now because the process won't work if you don't follow them to the letter. *In some cases, services won't be available if you miss the listed deadline.* If you have any questions, please e-mail Lauren Rochester, Awards Coordinator at [lrochester@spj.org](mailto:lrochester@spj.org) or call her at (317) 927-8000 x 210.

Guy T. Baehr, former chair  
Awards & Honors Committee

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## ABOUT THE MARK OF EXCELLENCE AWARDS

The Society of Professional Journalists has presented the Mark of Excellence Awards each year since 1972 to honor the best in student journalism. The awards cover categories in print, radio, television, and online collegiate journalism.

Entries are first judged on the regional level. Regional award winners are honored at SPJ's spring regional conferences. Regional first-place winning entries are forwarded to the national competition. National winners are honored each year at SPJ's Convention & National Journalism Conference.

The competition is open to anyone enrolled in a U.S. college or university and studying for an academic degree in 2012. International SPJ members may also apply. Students who have had full-time, professional journalism experience, outside of internships, are not eligible.

The MOE Awards are administered by staff at SPJ headquarters with the cooperation of the Regional Directors representing each of SPJ's 12 regions. Each Regional Director may appoint a Regional MOE Chair to assist with administrative duties associated with the contest. The awards are overseen by the society's Board of Directors and its Awards and Honors Committee.

The aim of this brief guidebook is to help all concerned to better serve the more than 6,000 student journalists who compete each year for the MOE Awards and to continue SPJ's leadership in encouraging the best in college journalism.

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## AWARDS TIMELINE

The Awards Timeline has been established by the Awards & Honors Committee in cooperation with SPJ headquarters to allow enough time for shipping, judging and return of winning entries, along with notification of regional and national award recipients. With a competition that involves more than 4,000 entries, 39 categories, 12 regions, more than 300 judges and well over 1,400 winners, it is very important that all involved meet the deadlines contained in this schedule.

**Please pay special attention to the items in bold below.**

Dec. 14, 2012	Regional Judging List Complete and on file with headquarters
Jan. 24, 2013	Mark of Excellence Online Entry/Postmark Deadline (Thursday)
Feb. 5, 2013	Mailed in MOE awards ship to regional judges
<b>Feb. 6, 2013</b>	<b>Open Regional Online Judging (Wednesday)</b>
<b>Feb. 27, 2013</b>	<b>Regional MOE Judging Deadline – All winners and finalists should be reported on the online awards site. (Wednesday)</b>
Mar. 1-Apr 2	Regional winners contacted, certificate production, entries processed for national round
March 18, 2013	Open National Online Judging
April 5, 2013	National MOE Judging Deadline
May 2, 2013	National Winners announced via press release

**All regional winner's information and winning entries must be reported on the online awards site by February 27, 2013.** The Mark of Excellence Awards contest is a two-round judging process. *Please keep in mind that the date of your spring conference has no bearing on when we need your regional winners back.* It is extremely important to work within the timeline set to allow time for regional winner recognition and the second-round national judging.

### Important Notes

- Send list of judges and their mailing address/phone number to headquarters by **Dec. 14, 2012.**
- All regional winners must be reported on the online awards site by **Feb. 27, 2013.**

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## HEADQUARTERS SERVICES OVERVIEW

Following is a brief outline of the services provided and managed by the national office with regard to the Mark of Excellence Awards competition. Many of these services are explained in more detail in other sections of this manual.

- The national office advertises the competition to potential entrants. (We ask that you also market the contest as you may have personal ties at local universities). The Mark of Excellence Awards postcards will be sent to all student members, student chapters and advisers, collegiate newspapers and broadcast outlets, and other collegiate journalism organizations. The awards are also promoted in *Quill*, the SPJ Web site, SPJ Leads, via new release and through e-mail blast reminders sent to advisers and student members.
- The national office will receive, process and sort all entries in the Mark of Excellence competition.
- The national office will ship any mailed-in entries to regional judges (or designated judging coordinators) on **Feb. 6, 2013. (Select categories only)**
- The national office will provide shipping labels so that judges can return winning entries (at no charge to the judge) to the national office **by Feb. 27, 2013.**
- The national office will provide assistance to each region (if requested) in notifying regional winners. (*See "Notification of Regional Winners" section for guidelines.*)
- The national office will complete and deliver certificates for regional award recipients (*See "Certificates" section for guidelines*)
- The national office will manage all contact with entrants in the event questions arise during or about the judging process.
- The national office will handle all disputes from students/advisers/universities.
- The national office will handle all aspects of the national round of the competition.
- The national office will compile statistics on the number of entries in each region (and category) and will make those available to the board of directors and the Awards & Honors Committee.

If you have any questions about any of these services, please contact SPJ headquarters at 317-927-8000 or [awards@spj.org](mailto:awards@spj.org).

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## **BEFORE THE ENTRIES ARRIVE**

### **Regional Judging Process Overview**

How the Regional Process Works: Regional judges are coordinated by either the RD or a Regional MOE Chair designated by the RD in each region. Each judge should review their categories on the online judging site. They should check to be sure they only have entries for the categories they have been assigned. If your judges have any questions, they should contact you, their Regional MOE Chair, or SPJ headquarters immediately.

Judges are asked to pick one first, second and third place winner in each category. **No ties or honorable mentions are awarded.** Places must be awarded in order! **THERE MUST BE A FIRST PLACE WINNER TO HAVE ANY OTHER PLACES AWARDED IN A CATEGORY.**

During the judging process, check in with your judges to make sure they have all their information and answer any questions they may pose. Remind them of the deadline to have all winners reported on the online awards site by **Feb. 27, 2013.**

### **What to Prepare in Advance**

Lining up judges is much less stressful for all concerned if you start early. Now is a good time to begin. Waiting until Thanksgiving is a bad idea. Most people consider being selected as an MOE judge an honor and you should present it as such. Pick people who are accomplished and well experienced in the area of journalism you want them to judge. Although judges don't have to be SPJ members, one way to find good judges is to scan the SPJ member roster for your region for likely candidates. Judges should have at least three years of professional experience in the area you asked them to judge.

Judges can be asked to judge one or more related categories. Headquarters can give you an idea of how many entries to expect in specific categories. Explain what will be expected and the deadlines involved. Suggest that your judges ask experienced colleagues to help them in their deliberations.

The process works best when judges have a manageable number of categories/entries to judge. Your motto should be, "many hands make light work."

HQ will provide you with a list of categories that have a mail-in option. If you want entries shipped directly to your judges, please provide headquarters with a list of your judges by **Dec. 14, 2012.** You will need to provide the judge's name, complete mailing address (No P.O. Boxes), telephone number and e-mail address. Please also list the categories they are judging.

Keep a complete and accurate list of your judges' information in case you need to contact them quickly. (An Excel spreadsheet is an excellent way to do this.) As the judging deadline approaches (**Feb. 27, 2013**), please take a few moments to call your judges to remind them of the approaching deadline and ask if they have any questions. The more we all stay in contact, the smoother the process will run.

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**WHEN THE ENTRIES ARRIVE FOR JUDGING (SELECTED CATEGORIES ONLY)**

**What to Expect**

--**Only these categories have a mail-in option:** : Best All-Around Daily Student Newspaper, Best All-Around Non-Daily Student Newspaper, Best Student Magazine (mail in only), Radio In-Depth Reporting, Best All-Around Radio Newscast, Television In-Depth Reporting and Best All-Around Television Newscast.

All other categories should be completely online

--If you or your Regional MOE Chair have arranged to have entries shipped directly to judges ...

Entries will ship to regional judges on **Feb. 5, 2013**. Your judges will receive the categories they have signed up to judge along with all judging materials and a shipping label so they can return the winning entries to headquarters. **Judges should review the materials and submit their choices for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place on the online awards site.**

-- If you've arranged to have all entries shipped to you or your Regional MOE Chair ...

In this case, multiple boxes of entries will be sent . Each category will be divided and contained in the packages. You or your Regional MOE Chair will need to repackage and ship the correct categories to your regional judges. When winners are picked, the judge will need to ship the winning entries back to headquarters and provide you with complete details of the winners.

**X Marks the Spot:** Each region has been assigned a color code. The region each entry is from can be identified by the colored mark located on each entry form. The identifying mark will be a colored X placed above the regional boundaries map on the entry form.

This process has been put in place to avoid a mix up of entries during the sorting process. Please be aware of your region's color when judging entries. In the event you receive an entry with a different color than assigned, **DO NOT JUDGE THAT ENTRY**. Contact headquarters immediately so the entry can be re-routed to compete in the correct region.

The chart below shows the colors assigned to each region:

Region 1: Pink	Region 7: Red
Region 2: Yellow	Region 8: Dark Green
Region 3: Blue	Region 9: Gold
Region 4: Purple	Region 10: Orange
Region 5: Sea Foam Green	Region 11: Magenta
Region 6: Black	Region 12: Brown

**Addressing Judging Questions that May Arise**

All contact with entrants or their advisers should be handled through headquarters. Please refer any inquiries or complaints about judging directly to headquarters. Do not contact judges about such questions or offer to put entrants or advisers in contact with judges. This is to keep the identity of the judges anonymous.

If a question arises about an entry, please contact headquarters at 317-927-8000 or [awards@spj.org](mailto:awards@spj.org). You will be asked to provide information about the entry (category, title, entrants and entrant/adviser's contact information) and any questions raised. Headquarters will contact the entrants directly..

### **Notification of Regional Winners**

SPJ headquarters will contact your regional winners if their information is received from you/your Regional MOE Chair by the **February 27, 2013** deadline. It will be your responsibility to contact winners if their information is not received by this date.

Headquarters will e-mail regional winners to let them know they have placed at the regional level. The letter will give details about your spring conference. Please advise headquarters of the complete details of your spring conference: registration fees, award luncheon fees, main contact person, times, location, dates, etc., so that they may be included in the letter. **If you do not want the actual place awarded revealed to the winners, please let headquarters know.**

### **Regional Recognition and Certificate Preparation**

SPJ headquarters will produce and ship MOE award certificates to you (Regional Director), at no charge, if results are in the awards system by the **February 27, 2013** deadline. Headquarters cannot provide this service unless it has a complete list by the deadline. You will be responsible for certificate production if your results are not received by February 27<sup>th</sup>. Headquarters will produce one (1) copy of each certificate. Students or advisers can order additional copies of the certificates, for a fee of \$2.50 + shipping per certificate, following the regional conference.

Regional Directors, here are the steps to get your signature to HQ:

- Sign a white piece of paper using a felt tip black pen or (fine point) marker
- Scan the image (remember to shut the lid of the scanner, if you don't the signature will appear to be on a gray background).
- Save as a .jpeg image
- Attached signature to an e-mail
- Send that e-mail to [awards@spj.org](mailto:awards@spj.org)
- Celebrate the fact that you don't have to sign 100+ certificates ☺

If a student finds an error on their certificate at the spring conference, please have the student make the correction on the original certificate. They should also write their name and mailing address on the back of the certificate. Please send all certificates that need corrected to headquarters immediately after your conference. If your signature is on file, the corrected certificate will be shipped directly to the student. If your signature is not on file, the certificate will be shipped to you for a signature and then you will need to send the certificate to the student. If students or advisers want additional copies of certificates, they should contact Headquarters at 317-927-8000 or [awards@spj.org](mailto:awards@spj.org).

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## WHEN REGIONAL JUDGING IS COMPLETE

Congratulations, all the hard work and preparation have paid off! The regional judging process is complete, and it's time to relax. Almost. You may receive questions about the national judging process, so here are some details about how that works.

### **National Judging Process**

All regional first place winners are forwarded to the national round of the competition. The National Judging process will begin on March 18, 2013. The names of national winners should be reported on April 5, 2013.

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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **1. *Who covers the cost of shipping?***

Headquarters will pay to ship entries from Indianapolis to Regional Directors or Regional MOE chairs (or to specific judges, if the entries are shipped from the national office-select categories only). Headquarters will also cover the cost of returning the winning entries to Indianapolis. Headquarters will reimburse reasonable shipping expenses between you, your Regional MOE Chair and judges. ALL packages should be sent via two day or ground delivery. Be sure to plan ahead so packages arrive at their destination while still meeting deadlines set by Headquarters.

The best solution is to provide headquarters with a list of your regional judges by **Dec. 14, 2012**. This way, entries will ship directly to your judges, eliminating the need for additional shipping between judges and coordinators.

### **2. *What should be returned to headquarters by regional judges?***

Regional judges should return the following items to SPJ headquarters by **Feb. 27, 2013**.

- **Complete 1<sup>st</sup> place winning entry** and the original entry form.

### **3. *Should I, or my judges, contact entrants during the MOE judging process?***

No. All contact with entrants should be handled through HQ. Please do not personally contact entrants.

If a question arises about an entry, please contact headquarters at 317-927-8000 or [awards@spj.org](mailto:awards@spj.org). At that time, you will be asked to provide information about the entry (category, title, entrants and entrant/adviser's contact information) and the question raised. Headquarters will contact the entrants directly.

### **4. *How do I find judges for my regional contest?***

Get started now! Contact colleagues, local newsrooms, SPJ pro chapters in your region, journalism departments at local universities, etc. Being a judge for SPJ is an honor and should be presented that way. Judges do not have to be SPJ members, but they should be people you consider good journalists with experience in the area they are being asked to judge. Judges should have at least three years of professional journalism experience in the category you are asking them to judge. Suggest that your judges pick some equally qualified colleagues to help them with the judging. The optimum number of judges for a category is usually three.

Detail the MOE timeline for them and what is expected of a judge in the MOE process. The sooner you get your judges lined up, the easier it will be to run the contest in your area. Consider getting a couple of alternate judges in case a confirmed judge drops out close to the entry ship date.

Your judges will be judging entries from other regions and your region's entries will be judged by judges from other regions. This is done to avoid potential conflicts of interest and make it easier to recruit judges. You should explain this to people who you are recruiting as judges so they know what to expect.

Remember to provide SPJ with the names and mailing addresses of your judges by **Dec. 14, 2012**, and entries will ship directly to them. You will need to provide the judge's name, complete mailing address and phone number. *No P.O. Boxes please.*

**5. *How do I deal with disputes or complaints from winners and non-winners?***

As a regional director, or Regional MOE Chair, you may get questions from students and faculty about their placement in the contest. Please explain that winners picked by the judges cannot be changed, although the Board of Directors, with advice from the Awards & Honors Committee, could decide not to give any award if doing so would compromise SPJ. Although, there is no formal appeal process, both headquarters and the Awards & Honors Committee welcome any/all comments and suggestions about the way our contest is conducted to better the MOE Awards in the future. Please pass all comments and suggestions on to headquarters by e-mailing them to [awards@spj.org](mailto:awards@spj.org). We keep a running list of comments to take into consideration for the next contest season.

If you feel you are unable to answer questions or a caller becomes hostile at any time, please refer the student or adviser to headquarters at 317-927-8000.

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## MARK OF EXCELLENCE AWARDS RULES/REQUIREMENTS

**Please be sure to read all information carefully.**

### **Current Competition Rules/Requirements (from [www.spj.org](http://www.spj.org))**

Annually, the Society of Professional Journalists presents the Mark of Excellence Awards honoring the best in student journalism. The awards offer categories for print, radio, television and online collegiate journalism. Entries are first judged on the regional level. Regional award winners will be honored at the spring conferences. First place regional winners are forwarded on to the national competition.

### **Deadline for entries: Jan. 24, 2013**

The contest is open to anyone enrolled in a college or university in the U.S. studying for an academic degree in 2012. International SPJ members may also apply. Students who have had full-time, professional journalism experience, outside of internships, are not eligible. Entries must have been published or broadcast during the 2012 calendar year. View the MOE requirements below for further details.

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### **About the Awards**

Entries are first judged on the regional level. Regional winners will be honored at SPJ's spring conferences, and the first-place winning entries will be forwarded to the national competition.

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### **Eligibility**

- The contest is open to anyone enrolled in a college or university in the U.S. studying for an academic degree in 2012. International SPJ members may also apply. Students who have had full-time, professional journalism experience, outside of internships, are not eligible.
- All entries must have been published or broadcast in 2012.
- The entrant must have been enrolled as a student at the time of publication or broadcast.
- Work published or broadcast while working as a student intern is acceptable.
- Unpublished manuscripts, classroom exercises and unaired news broadcasts do not qualify. Any work found to be unpublished, unaired or a classroom exercise will be disqualified.
- A classroom exercise is defined as work assigned for a grade or fulfillment of a course requirement and is not eligible for an MOE Award unless it was also published outside of class in the campus/local newspaper, campus/ local broadcast stations or Web site.
- International SPJ members: Print entries must include the original piece, as well as English translation; broadcast entries must have English subtitles

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### **General Rules**

- Incomplete entries will be disqualified. Entrant will not be notified of such disqualification nor will their entry fee be refunded.
- Material submitted for the contest will not be returned. Winning entries may be reproduced or posted on the SPJ Web site for educational or other purposes.
- Only select categories can be mailed in. Those entries must be postmarked by **Jan. 24, 2013**.
- **Categories with a mail in option:** Best All-Around Daily Student Newspaper, Best All-Around Non-Daily Student Newspaper, Best Student Magazine (mail in only), Radio In-Depth

Reporting, Best All-Around Radio Newscast, Television In-Depth Reporting and Best All-Around Television Newscast.

- All mailed entries should include a copy of the online award confirmation.
- Mark the date of publication or broadcast on all items submitted.
- Each contestant may enter as many categories as desired and may submit no more than two entries per category.
- Each entry must be accompanied by the correct entry fee. If payment is being sent separately by your school's finance department, a letter must be included stating this and supplying the contact information for your finance department.
- Be sure the name of each student who worked on the entry is listed on the entry form and spelled correctly.
- Up to four individuals may be named on a team entry; otherwise, the entry must be submitted in the name of the newspaper, magazine, station or online news site.
- Work should be submitted in the region where the entrant was enrolled in school. See the SPJ Web site or entry form for regional boundaries.

**Mail entries to:**

Mark of Excellence Awards  
Society of Professional Journalists  
3909 N. Meridian St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46208

**Mail in option applies to select categories only.**

- **ACCURACY REQUIREMENT:** Any corrections, clarifications or retractions made after initial publishing or broadcast should be submitted as part of the entry. Also, copies of any written challenges to the report's accuracy sent to the entrant or the news organization by or on behalf of those mentioned — including but not limited to letters, e-mails or legal papers — must be included with the entry. Responses by the news organization also should be included.

**Fees**

Each submission by an SPJ member must be accompanied by a \$9 entry fee and the entrant's membership number. You may not use another student's membership number to obtain the \$9 member entry fee. Each submission by a nonmember must be accompanied by an \$18 entry fee.

- When an entry by more than one person is submitted, a \$9 fee will be acceptable if at least one person on the team is a member of SPJ. The member must be identified and supply their membership number. **YOUR ADVISER'S MEMBERSHIP NUMBER MAY NOT BE USED.**
- Entries submitted in the Best All-Around categories must be accompanied by an entry fee — \$9 if the editor(s) is (are) a member of SPJ, \$18 if the editor(s) is (are) not a member. To claim the \$9 rate, you must supply the editor's name and membership number.
- Make checks and money orders payable to: Society of Professional Journalists. Entrants paying by check should include the award confirmation number in the memo line.
- No refunds will be issued.

**Judging/Criteria**

Judging will be based on overall excellence. Criteria include:

- Accuracy and completeness
- Enterprise and ingenuity

- Adherence to high journalistic standards
- Significance and effectiveness
- Extenuating circumstances
- Clarity, insight and respect for the audience.
- Creative use of the medium's unique capabilities
- Adherence to the SPJ Code of Ethics
- Judges will weigh the resources available to the student when selecting the winners.
- Judging will take place first on the regional level, with judges for each region selecting regional winners in each category from among the entrants in that region. First, second and third place winner will be chosen unless the judges find that the entries do not meet the overall standard of excellence required. No ties or honorable mentions will be awarded. The winners in each region will be honored at their regional conference in the spring of 2013. The first-place winning entries from each region will go on to compete at the national level, with different panels of national judges selecting one national first-place winner in each category. These winners will be honored at the SPJ Convention & National Journalism Conference in the fall.

### **Category-specific Rules**

#### **Print Entries (Newspaper and Magazine Categories)**

- Entrants should submit a PDF of the news/magazine page on which the story appeared. **Proof of the date of publication is required.** Word documents and links to stories that appeared on the publication's online news site will not be accepted in these categories.
- Limit a series to no more than five stories.

#### **Mail in instructions - Best All-Around Daily Student Newspaper and Best Student Magazine categories only.**

- Entrant **MUST** fill out entry form on the awards site, print out the confirmation form and include it with the submitted newspapers.

#### **Art/Graphics Entries**

- For photographs published in a newspaper, magazine or on an online news site.
- Entrant should submit a PDF of the news/magazine page on which the art appeared, or a link to the art published on an online news site. **Proof of the date of publication is required.**
- Submitting a separate digital photo is optional.

#### **Radio Entries**

- The original broadcast must not be altered.
- Work must have been aired by a campus, public or commercial radio station.
- Work aired on an online radio station or by Podcast is also eligible.

#### **Mail in instructions - Radio In-Depth Reporting and Best All-Around Radio Newscast only.**

Entrant **MUST** fill out entry form on the awards site, print out the form and include it with the submitted CD-ROM. Label CD-ROM with the name of the entry, school, category and entrants. Submit CD-ROM in a protective case. Series or entries with multiple newscasts should be entered on one or two CD-ROMs.

### **Television Entries**

- The original broadcast must not be altered.
- Work must have been broadcast by a campus, public or commercial television station or franchised cable television system.
- Work aired on an Internet TV station or by Podcast is also eligible.
- A script or transcript is welcome, but not required.

### **Mail in instructions - Television In-Depth Reporting and Best All-Around Television Newscast only.**

Entrant **MUST** fill out entry form on the awards site, print out the form and include it with the submitted DVD. Label DVD with the name of the entry, school, category and entrants. Submit DVD in a protective case. Series or entries with multiple newscasts should be entered on one DVD. Videocassettes will not be accepted.

### **Online Entries**

- Entries that do not provide complete and accurate URLs will be disqualified.
- Entrants must keep their nominated entries intact and accessible until October 8, 2013.
- Best Affiliated Web Site and Best Independent Online Student Publication categories will be judged based on current 2013 content during the month of judging, not work done during the 2012 calendar year like the rest of the Mark of Excellence categories.

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## MARK OF EXCELLENCE AWARDS CATEGORIES

**CURRENT INFORMATION AS OF 8/31/12. Please read all category information carefully. (Some of the 2-Year categories will be removed before the start of this year's contest.)**

### Category List

#### Newspapers

##### **Breaking News Reporting-4 Year College/University**

##### **Breaking News Reporting-2 Year/Community College**

Submit a story or stories written under a next day deadline about a single breaking news event.

Entrants should submit a PDF of the newspaper page on which the story appeared. **Proof of the date of publication is required.** Word documents will not be accepted.

##### **General News Reporting-4 Year College/University**

##### **General News Reporting-2 Year/Community College**

Submit an article or series about a single news event or issue, not written on next-day deadline. Limit a series to no more than five stories. Word documents will not be accepted.

##### **In-Depth Reporting-4 Year College/University**

##### **In-Depth Reporting-2 Year/Community College**

Submit a single article or series. Entries should use multiple sources to explore the subject in significant depth. Limit a series to no more than five stories. Word documents will not be accepted.

##### **Feature Writing-4 Year College/University**

##### **Feature Writing-2 Year/Community College**

Submit a single article or a series. Entries may be personality profiles, trend stories, human-interest stories or any other type of feature that is not general or breaking news. Limit a series to no more than five stories. Word documents will not be accepted.

##### **Sports Writing-4 Year College/University**

##### **Sports Writing-2 Year/Community College**

Submit one sports news or feature story about sports or a sports figure. (Columns should be entered in the Sports Column Writing category). Word documents will not be accepted.

##### **Editorial Writing-4 Year College/University**

##### **Editorial Writing-2 Year/Community College**

Submit three different published editorials. Word documents will not be accepted.

##### **General Column Writing-4 Year College/University**

##### **General Column Writing-2 Year/Community College**

Submit three different published columns by an individual writer or writing team. Entries may include, but are not limited to, humor and news analysis. Word documents will not be accepted.

##### **Sports Column Writing-4 Year College/University**

##### **Sports Column Writing-2 Year/Community College**

Submit three different published sports columns by an individual writer or writing team. Word documents will not be accepted.

**Best All-Around Daily Student Newspaper- 4 Year College/University**  
**Best All-Around Daily Student Newspaper- 2 Year/Community College**

This category is for newspapers that are published at **least four days per week**. Submit complete PDFs of issues published on or as close as possible to March 7, Oct. 2 and Dec. 3, 2012. **All three requested issues must be submitted or entry will be disqualified.** Links to Web sites will not be accepted in this category.

Mail in option

**Best All-Around Non-Daily Student Newspaper-4 Year College/University**  
**Best All-Around Non-Daily Student Newspaper-2 Year/Community College**

This category is for newspapers published **less than four days per week**. Submit complete issues published on or as close as possible to March 7, Oct. 2 and Dec. 3, 2012. **All three requested issues must be submitted or entry will be disqualified.** Links to Web sites will not be accepted in this category.

Mail in option

**Magazines**

**Non-Fiction Magazine Article-4 Year College/University**  
**Non-Fiction Magazine Article-2 Year/Community College**

Submit a PDF of a single article. Any sidebars and artwork should be included. **Proof of the date of publication is required.** Word documents will not be accepted.

**Best Student Magazine-4 Year College/University**  
**Best Student Magazine-2 Year/Community College**

Submit **one** complete issue published during the 2012 calendar year. Please include a letter explaining if design and layout was done primarily by students or professionals. Award will be in the magazine's name. Only one entry per magazine is permitted.

**Magazines must be mailed/shipped to SPJ Headquarters.** No electronic entries will be accepted in this category.

Mail in (SPJ HQ address: 3909 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46208)

**Art/Graphics**

**Breaking News Photography-4 Year College/University**  
**Breaking News Photography-2 Year/Community College**

Submit one photo of a breaking news event.

For photographs published in a newspaper, magazine or on an online news site.

Entrant should submit a PDF of the newspaper/magazine page on which the photo appeared, or a link to the photo published on an online news site. **Proof of the date of publication is required.**

**General News Photography-4 Year College/University**  
**General News Photography-2 Year/Community College**

Submit one photo of a news event, not covered on deadline.

For photographs published in a newspaper, magazine or on an online news site.

Entrant should submit a PDF of the newspaper/magazine page on which the photo appeared, or a link to the photo published on an online news site. **Proof of the date of publication is required.**

**Feature Photography-4 Year College/University****Feature Photography-2 Year/Community College**

Submit a photo, or a short series of photos, that tells its own story without an accompanying news article. Limit a series to no more than five photos.

For photographs published in a newspaper, magazine or on an online news site.

Entrant should submit a PDF of the newspaper/magazine page on which the photo appeared, or a link to the photo published on an online news site. **Proof of the date of publication is required.**

**Photo Illustration-4 Year College/University****Photo Illustration-2 Year/Community College**

Submit a photo, or a short series, of photos that helps illustrate a news or feature story without necessarily being straight photography. Entries may be staged, composite or otherwise manipulated, but should disclose that to the reader. Limit a series to no more than five photos.

For photo illustrations published in a newspaper, magazine or on an online news site.

Entrant should submit a PDF of the newspaper/magazine page on which the photo illustration appeared, or a link to the illustration published on an online news site. **Proof of the date of publication is required.**

**Sports Photography-4 Year College/University****Sports Photography-2 Year/Community College**

Submit one photo of a sports event.

For photographs published in a newspaper, magazine or on an online news site.

Entrant should submit a PDF of the newspaper/magazine page on which the photo appeared, or a link to the photo published on an online news site. **Proof of the date of publication is required.**

**Editorial Cartooning-4 Year College/University****Editorial Cartooning-2 Year/Community College**

Submit three different published cartoons commenting on issues of significance to the newspaper's readers.

For cartoons published in a newspaper, magazine or on an online news site.

Entrant should submit a PDF of the newspaper/magazine page on which the cartoon appeared, or a link to the illustration published on an online news site. **Proof of the date of publication is required.**

**Radio****Radio News Reporting-4 Year College/University****Radio News Reporting-2 Year/Community College**

Submit a story or series about a newsworthy event or development. Entry may not exceed a total of 10 minutes.

The original broadcast must not be altered. Work must have been aired by a campus, public or commercial radio station. Work aired on an online radio station or by Podcast is also eligible. All audio files must be .mp3 (**preferred**), .wav, .aiff. Audio in other formats will not be accepted.

**Radio Feature-4 Year College/University**  
**Radio Feature-2 Year/Community College**

Submit a story or series about a feature topic. Subjects may include, but are not limited to, personality profiles, sidebars, consumer information, historical perspectives, trend stories or reviews of cultural events. Entry may not exceed a total of 10 minutes.

The original broadcast must not be altered. Work must have been aired by a campus, public or commercial radio station. Work aired on an online radio station or by Podcast is also eligible. All audio files must be .mp3 (**preferred**), .wav, .aiff. Audio in other formats will not be accepted.

**Radio In-Depth Reporting-4 year College/University**  
**Radio In-Depth Reporting-2 Year/Community College**

Submit a story or series about a topic explored in significant depth with multiple sources. Entry may not exceed a total of 30 minutes.

The original broadcast must not be altered. Work must have been aired by a campus, public or commercial radio station. Work aired on an online radio station or by Podcast is also eligible. All audio files must be .mp3 (**preferred**), .wav, .aiff. Audio in other formats will not be accepted.

**Mail in option** – Entrants should submit all parts on one CD-ROM. Label CD-ROM with the category name, the name of the entry, school and entrants. Submit CD-ROM in a protective case.

**Radio Sports Reporting-4 Year College/University**  
**Radio Sports Reporting-2 Year/Community College**

Entries may be either a story or series about a sports topic. Subjects may include, but are not limited to, breaking news or features. Entry may not exceed a total of 10 minutes. Play-by-play of a sporting event is not eligible.

The original broadcast must not be altered. Work must have been aired by a campus, public or commercial radio station. Work aired on an online radio station or by Podcast is also eligible. All audio files must be .mp3 (**preferred**), .wav, .aiff. Audio in other formats will not be accepted.

**Best All-Around Radio Newscast-4 Year College/University**  
**Best All-Around Radio Newscast-2 Year/Community College**

Submit three newscasts of no more than 30 minutes each. Broadcast dates to be on or as close as possible to March 7, Oct. 2 and Dec. 3, 2012. **All three requested newscasts must be submitted or the entry will be disqualified.** Award will be made in the radio station's name.

The original broadcast must not be altered. Work must have been aired by a campus, public or commercial radio station. Work aired on an online radio station or by Podcast is also eligible. All audio files must be .mp3 (**preferred**), .wav, .aiff. Audio in other formats will not be accepted.

**Mail in option** – Entrants should submit newscasts on one/two CD-ROMs. Label each CD with the category, name of the entry, school and entrants. Submit CD(s) in a protective case.

**Television**

**Television Breaking News Reporting-4 Year College/University**  
**Television Breaking News Reporting-2 Year/Community College**

Submit a story or series about a breaking news event, aired within 24 hours of the event. Entry may not exceed a total of 10 minutes.

The original broadcast must not be altered. Work must have been broadcast by a campus, public or commercial television station or franchised cable television system. Work aired on an Internet TV station or by Podcast is also eligible.

Entrant should upload the work to an online video site and submit the URL (preferred), or upload a video file to the awards site. [50 MB file limit] All video files must be one of the following formats: .wmv, .mov, .mpeg or .mp4.

**Television General News Reporting-4 Year College-University**  
**Television General News Reporting-2 Year/Community College**

Submit a story or series about a news event or issue, not prepared on daily deadline. Entry may not exceed a total of 10 minutes.

The original broadcast must not be altered. Work must have been broadcast by a campus, public or commercial television station or franchised cable television system. Work aired on an Internet TV station or by Podcast is also eligible. A script or transcript is welcome, but not required.

Entrant should upload the work to an online video site and submit the URL (preferred), or upload a video file to the awards site. [50 MB file limit] All video files must be one of the following formats: .wmv, .mov, .mpeg or .mp4.

**Television Feature-4 Year College/University**  
**Television Feature-2 Year/Community College**

Submit a story or series about a feature topic. Subjects may include, but are not limited to, personality profiles, sidebars, consumer information, historical perspectives or reviews of cultural events. Entry may not exceed a total of 10 minutes.

The original broadcast must not be altered. Work must have been broadcast by a campus, public or commercial television station or franchised cable television system. Work aired on an Internet TV station or by Podcast is also eligible. A script or transcript is welcome, but not required.

Entrant should upload the work to an online video site and submit the URL (preferred), or upload a video file to the awards site. [50 MB file limit] All video files must be one of the following formats: .wmv, .mov, .mpeg or .mp4.

**Television In-Depth Reporting-4 Year College/University**  
**Television In-Depth Reporting-2 Year/Community College**

Submit a story or series about a topic or issue of public importance that is explored in significant depth with multiple sources. Entry may not exceed a total of 30 minutes.

**Mail in option-** Entries with multiple newscasts should combine all parts on one DVD. Videocassettes will not be accepted.

The original broadcast must not be altered. Work must have been broadcast by a campus, public or commercial television station or franchised cable television system. Work aired on an Internet TV station or by Podcast is also eligible. A script or transcript is welcome, but not required.

Entrant should upload the work to an online video site and submit the URL (preferred), or upload a video file to the awards site. [50 MB file limit] All video files must be one of the following formats: .wmv, .mov, .mpeg or .mp4.

**Television Sports Reporting-4 Year College/University**  
**Television Sports Reporting-2 Year/Community College**

Submit a story or series about a sports topic. Subjects may include, but are not limited to, breaking news or features. Entry may not exceed a total of 10 minutes. Play-by-Play of a sporting event is not eligible.

The original broadcast must not be altered. Work must have been broadcast by a campus, public or commercial television station or franchised cable television system. Work aired on an Internet TV station or by Podcast is also eligible. A script or transcript is welcome, but not required.

Entrant should upload the work to an online video site and submit the URL (preferred), or upload a video file to the awards site. [50 MB file limit] All video files must be one of the following formats: .wmv, .mov, .mpeg or .mp4.

**Television News Photography-4 Year College/University**  
**Television News Photography-2 Year/Community College**

Submit video of a breaking news event or general non-feature news story. Entry may not exceed a total of 10 minutes.

The original broadcast must not be altered. Work must have been broadcast by a campus, public or commercial television station or franchised cable television system. Work aired on an Internet TV station or by Podcast is also eligible. A script or transcript is welcome, but not required.

Entrant should upload the work to an online video site and submit the URL (preferred), or upload a video file to the awards site. [50 MB file limit] All video files must be one of the following formats: .wmv, .mov, .mpeg or .mp4.

**Television Feature Photography-4 Year College/University**  
**Television Feature Photography-2 Year/Community College**

Submit video of a feature topic that may include, but is not limited to, personality profiles, sidebars, consumer information, historical perspectives, trend stories or reviews of cultural events. Entry may not exceed a total of 10 minutes.

The original broadcast must not be altered. Work must have been broadcast by a campus, public or commercial television station or franchised cable television system. Work aired on an Internet TV station or by Podcast is also eligible. A script or transcript is welcome, but not required.

Entrant should upload the work to an online video site and submit the URL (preferred), or upload a video file to the awards site. [50 MB file limit] All video files must be one of the following formats: .wmv, .mov, .mpeg or .mp4.

**Television Sports Photography-4 Year College/University**  
**Television Sports Photography-2 Year/Community College**

Submit video from a single sports event. Entry may not exceed a total of 10 minutes.

The original broadcast must not be altered. Work must have been broadcast by a campus, public or commercial television station or franchised cable television system. Work aired on an Internet TV station or by Podcast is also eligible. A script or transcript is welcome, but not required.

Entrant should upload the work to an online video site and submit the URL (preferred), or upload a video file to the awards site. [50 MB file limit] All video files must be one of the following formats: .wmv, .mov, .mpeg or .mp4.

**Best All-Around Television Newscast-4 Year College/University**

**Best All-Around Television Newscast-2 Year/Community College**

Submit three newscasts of no more than 30 minutes each. Broadcasts to be on or as close as possible to March 7, Oct. 2 and Dec. 3, 2012. **All three requested newscasts must be submitted or entry will be disqualified.** Award will be made in the television station's name.

If uploading the entry- entrant should upload the work to an online video site and submit the URL (preferred), or upload a video file to the awards site. [50 MB file limit] All video files must be one of the following formats: .wmv, .mov, .mpeg or .mp4.

**Mail in option-** Combine all parts on one DVD. Videocassettes will not be accepted. The original broadcast must not be altered. Work must have been broadcast by a campus, public or commercial television station or franchised cable television system. Work aired on an Internet TV station or by Podcast is also eligible. A script or transcript is welcome, but not required.

**Online**

**Online News Reporting-4 Year College/University**

**Online News Reporting-2 Year/Community College**

Submit a story or package about a newsworthy event, development or single issue of significance to the public. Judges will consider ingenuity, interactivity and use of multimedia tools.

Entries consist of one main URL and up to five additional URLs to highlight specific features of the article or package. Entries that do not provide complete and accurate URLs will be disqualified. Entrants must keep their nominated entries intact and accessible until October 8, 2013.

**Online Feature Reporting-4 Year College/University**

**Online Feature Reporting-2 Year/Community College**

Submit a story or package about a feature topic. Subjects may include, but are not limited to, personality profiles, trend stories, human-interest stories, consumer information, historical perspectives or reviews of cultural events. Judges will consider ingenuity, interactivity and use of multimedia tools.

Entries consist of one main URL and up to five additional URLs to highlight specific features of the article or package. Entries that do not provide complete and accurate URLs will be disqualified. Entrants must keep their nominated entries intact and accessible until October 8, 2013.

**Online In-Depth Reporting-4 Year College/University**

**Online In-Depth Reporting-2 Year/Community College**

Submit a story or package about a topic or issue of public importance that is explored in significant depth with multiple sources. Judges will consider ingenuity, interactivity and use of multimedia tools.

Entries consist of one main URL and up to five additional URLs to highlight specific features of the article or package. Entries that do not provide complete and accurate URLs will be disqualified. Entrants must keep their nominated entries intact and accessible until October 8, 2013.

**Online Sports Reporting-4 Year College/University**  
**Online Sports Reporting-2 Year/Community College**

Submit a story or package about a sports event or sports figure. Entries may be either news or feature pieces. Judges will consider ingenuity, interactivity and use of multimedia tools.

Entries consist of one main URL and up to five additional URLs to highlight specific features of the article or package. Entries that do not provide complete and accurate URLs will be disqualified. Entrants must keep their nominated entries intact and accessible until October 8, 2013.

**Online Opinion & Commentary-4 Year College/University**  
**Online Opinion & Commentary-2 Year/Community College**

Submit **three** individual pieces or packages dealing either seriously or humorously with opinion or commentary. Entries can be personal columns, op-ed pieces or staff editorials.

Entries that do not provide complete and accurate URLs will be disqualified. Entrants must keep their nominated entries intact and accessible until October 8, 2013.

**Best Affiliated Web Site-4 Year College/University\***  
**Best Affiliated Web Site-2 Year/Community College\***

This award is for Internet sites operated in conjunction with a student newspaper, student magazine or student broadcast station. Entrants should include a Word document describing how the site's content and mission differ from and enhance that of its affiliate. Judges will consider design, content, interactivity and use of multimedia tools. Award will be made in the paper, magazine or station's name.

Entrants should submit one main URL and up to three additional URLs (in the same domain) to highlight features.

\* The live Web site will be judged based on current 2013 content during the month of judging, not work done during the 2011 calendar year like the rest of the Mark of Excellence categories.

Entries that do not provide complete and accurate URLs will be disqualified. Entrants must keep their nominated entries intact and accessible until October 8, 2013.

**Best Independent Online Student Publication-4 Year College/University\***  
**Best Independent Online Student Publication-2 Year/Community College\***

This award is for online publications and Internet sites that produce primarily original content and operate independently of other student news organizations. Entrants should include a Word document describing the site and how it serves its audience. Judges will consider design, content, interactivity and use of multimedia tools. Award will be made in the outlet's name.

Entrants should submit one main URL and up to three additional URLs (in the same domain) to highlight features.

\* The live Web site will be judged based on current 2013 content during the month of judging, not work done during the 2011 calendar year like the rest of the Mark of Excellence categories.

Entries that do not provide complete and accurate URLs will be disqualified. Entrants must keep their nominated entries intact and accessible until October 8, 2013.

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## REGIONAL MOE AWARDS CEREMONY

Here are some suggestions to help you in planning the event.

Each Regional Director will receive an Excel sheet via e-mail of all the winners in their region.

We suggest the electronic file is passed on to the spring conference planners. They will want to cross reference people who have registered for your conference against this list. It should be noted somewhere when a regional MOE winner registers for the conference. This will make it easier when creating a list of who to recognize at your ceremony.

### **Best Practices for your ceremony:**

1. You may want to make it a point to only recognize students/schools that are in attendance. (see above about cross referencing registrant list with MOE winner list). This will cut down on the time spent passing out awards and will eliminate names being called and no one coming up to accept it.
2. You will be provided with your region's list of winners at least two weeks prior to your conference. You should spend some time looking over the list and marking any names you think may be problematic to pronounce. This list contains complete contact information for either the student or their adviser. If you have an issue with a name, please contact the student or adviser to find out the correct pronunciation. It is a disservice to our winners to mispronounce their name.
3. Present the winners in a category by announcing third place, second place and then first place.
4. Have a helper! You don't want to be pulling certificates out of the pile, calling names and shaking hands. Your helper can hand out the certificates/shake hands while you continue to announce names.
5. You may want to consider having a list of finalists at each seat so attendees can follow along with your presentation. If time permits, a PowerPoint presentation is also a nice visual to have at the luncheon.