



# ICPA

ILLINOIS  
COLLEGE  
PRESS  
ASSOCIATION

Established 1982

*Affiliated with the  
Illinois Press Association*

Nov. 20, 2023

Dear Media Program Advisers and Editors:

The time is here again to select and submit your entries for the Illinois College Press Association Contest. Enclosed you'll find the contest rules, categories and directions for online submission. Please read the materials carefully, and if you have any questions, please send an email.

We are using the services of the Illinois Press Association's contest coordinating website, ACES. All entries will be submitted in electronic format to the website listed in the attached materials. Please follow the enclosed step-by-step instructions for how to submit your materials to the site.

Entries must be received/time stamped no later than **11:59 p.m., Mon. Dec. 18, 2023**. Categories will be judged by professional journalists across Illinois and other parts of the country. For most categories, media programs compete in divisions determined by undergraduate enrollment, except for nine categories that are open to all schools.

All awards, including first, second and third places and honorable mentions, will be announced at the annual ICPA convention, February 16-17, 2024, in Chicago.

If your news organization is not currently affiliated with the ICPA or your membership has lapsed, now is the time to renew. Those forms will accompany these materials. *To enter the contest, your publication(s) needs to be an active ICPA member.*

Thanks for your participation!

Stacia G. Campbell  
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2nd Vice President  
Illinois College Press Association  
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## **2023 ICPA Contest Rules and Instructions**

Member news organizations and students on staff during the contest period are eligible to enter. While a news organization must be an active member of the Illinois College Press Association to enter the contest, there are no entry fees.

**All entries must have been published between Dec. 1, 2022, and Nov. 30, 2023.** Entries must be submitted through the ACES contest system. Directions attached.

*Questions can be submitted to:*

Stacia Campbell, Northwestern University, ICPA 2nd Vice President

[icpa@newspapercontest.com](mailto:icpa@newspapercontest.com) OR [s-campbell@northwestern.edu](mailto:s-campbell@northwestern.edu)

**Deadline for submitting entries: Monday, December 18, 2023, at 11:59 p.m.**

- General info about ACES follows. Improperly prepared or late entries will be disqualified.
- We reserve the right to cancel a category if there is a lack of entries.
- All entries must be the work of a student member of a student news organization staff that is an active member of the Illinois College Press Association.
- Please limit the number of students listed for awards. Cite the person whose work is most reflected for each entry. A second person may be named if they contributed significantly to the overall story, design, etc. Do not list every editorial board member for editorials; instead, name the person who wrote the editorial or “staff.” **Entries with three or more entrant names will be credited to “staff.”**
- *Please only enter your best work, not just something in every category.* Judges get very frustrated when they have to evaluate dozens of entries of mediocre work only entered because newspapers feel they should enter every category, no matter the quality of the entries.
- EACH PUBLICATION MAY HAVE MULTIPLE PEOPLE SUBMITTING ON ITS BEHALF, BUT YOU MUST COORDINATE ON YOUR END.

## Important Reminders for the 2023 Contest

- General Excellence is broken down into print and website categories. The Online News Site category has been eliminated as it duplicated the General Excellence Website category.
- The Sweepstakes Award will continue.
- Best Podcast is divided into different content types — news, entertainment/culture and sports. Due to the number of expected entries, judges are asked to listen to a minimum of 10 minutes for each entry.

## Category Notes

- Any member media program may submit entries for the Open competition. For all other categories, media programs compete in divisions determined by undergraduate enrollment.
- **Schools may submit two entries per category, unless otherwise noted.** Submit only entries of high quality that merit attention. Screenshots (.pdfs) of work from the member media program's website are allowed in the appropriate categories.
- For Photos, a photo published only online may be entered, even if it was not published in print.
- For Best Sports News Story, please note this *does not include game stories*. There is a separate Best Sports Game Story category.
- For Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Coverage: Eligible coverage will include but not be limited to race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability and other differences. Judges will consider depth of coverage of the overall entry. An entry will consist of up to three pieces from one organization. Pieces do not have to be by the same person. May or may not be a series. One entry per organization. Judges will review URLs for web or digital content and PDFs for print.
- For Sweepstakes, there is no entry to submit as winners are determined by point totals.
- **Note on file names:** please include a headline or slug & abbreviated publication name when naming files to help judges identify entries. Example: baseball-nyt.pdf is better than page1.pdf or untitled1.jpg.

## **2023 ICPA Contest Categories**

**NOTE: the ACES contest website refers to the contest categories as classes.**

### **Open (for all media programs)**

1. Editorial Cartoon (include a brief explanatory note for cartoon of narrowly local content)
2. Entertainment Supplement – Weekly or Periodic Entertainment Section (Only one entry per school; send single PDFs that include multiple pages only, **not** multiple PDFs.)
3. Special Supplement (Excludes weekly or periodic entertainment supplements. Send single PDFs that include multiple pages only, **not** multiple PDFs.)
4. Graphic Illustration (hand-drawn line art, illustrations, charts or graphs that complement news, editorial or features copy in package; single PDFs that include multiple pages only, **not** multiple PDFs, are preferred.)
5. Critical Review – Film
6. Critical Review – Other Than Film
7. Advertisement – Best Print Ad (staff-produced for outside client or in-house promotion)
8. Advertisement – Best Digital Ad (staff-produced for outside client or in-house promotion)
9. Newsletter – Judges will consider the quality of writing, design, subject matter and overall impact of e-newsletter

### **By Division (divisions based on school undergraduate enrollment)**

10. General Excellence – Print: Three complete editions published consecutively within contest timeframe (**no stand-alone special editions**). Only one entry per school. (Three complete issues constitute one entry; submit one PDF). Judges look for quality of writing, reporting, coverage and content; leadership in opinion content; in-depth reporting; effective use of headlines; quality of photography; visual appeal of design, art and graphics.
11. General Excellence – Web: Ease of navigation and visual appeal; effective use of multimedia and visuals; quality of writing, reporting, coverage and content; leadership in opinion content; in-depth reporting. Submit your publication's URL.
12. Front Page Layout: Three pages of the newspaper's choice. Only one entry per school. (Submit single PDF that includes three consecutive front pages; send single PDFs that include multiple pages only, not multiple PDFs)
13. Editorial (unsigned opinion of the newspaper's editorial board)
14. Opinion Page(s) (single or double truck to be judged on both layout and content; send single PDFs that include multiple pages only, not multiple PDFs)
15. Column (excluding sports)

16. Feature Story (other than sports)
17. Feature Page Design (single or double truck judged on layout and content; Submit single PDF that includes all pages.)
18. News Story (single story, can be accompanied by related sidebars published same day; Submit single PDF that includes all pages)
19. Sports News Story (single story, can be accompanied by related sidebars published same day; Submit single PDF that includes all pages)
20. Sports Game Story (covering a sporting event; written on deadline; Submit single PDF that includes all pages)
21. Sports Feature Story (Submit single PDF that includes all pages)
22. Sports Column (Submit single PDF that includes all pages)
23. Sports Page Design (single or double truck to be judged on layout and content; Submit single PDF that includes all pages.)
24. In-depth Reporting (single story or stories, either as a series or continuing coverage; sending single PDFs that include multiple pages only, not multiple PDFs, preferred)
25. Headline Writing (for single story, must include story)
26. Photo Essay (series of related photos used to tell a story; may be accompanied by a text story; send single PDFs that include multiple pages only, not multiple PDFs, preferred)
27. Feature Photo (including sports)
28. Sports Photo (game or sideline/crowd action or reaction)
29. General News Photo (all news photos, other than spot news. Timely news value is important.)
30. Spot News Photo (newsworthy event with no advanced planning possible; published in following issue)
31. Multimedia Reporting (include link to the URL in the entry)
32. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Coverage (Eligible coverage will include but not be limited to race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability and other differences. Judges will consider depth of coverage of the overall entry. An entry will consist of up to three pieces from one organization. Pieces do not have to be by the same person. May or may not be a series. One entry per organization. Judges will review URLs for web or digital content and PDFs for print.)
33. Podcast – News (two-entry limit, 30 minutes max running time for each entry)
34. Podcast – Sports (two-entry limit, 30 minutes max running time for each entry)
35. Podcast – Entertainment & Culture (two-entry limit, 30 minutes max running time for each entry)

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*If you have any questions, please contact Stacia Campbell, ICPA 2nd Vice President, at [icpa@newspapercontest.com](mailto:icpa@newspapercontest.com) or [s-campbell@northwestern.edu](mailto:s-campbell@northwestern.edu).*