

QUILL & SCROLL
100th
Anniversary

Writing, Visual, Multimedia Contest

2026

BLUE AND GOLD AWARDS

QUILL & SCROLL
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Anniversary

STAFF EXCELLENCE AWARD

2026 BLUE AND GOLD SWEEPSTAKES AWARD

FRANCIS HOWELL NORTH HIGH SCHOOL

ST. CHARLES, MISSOURI

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FIRST PLACE WRITING

2026 BLUE AND GOLD AWARD

KINGWOOD PARK HIGH SCHOOL

KINGWOOD, TEXAS

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SECOND PLACE WRITING

2026 BLUE AND GOLD AWARD

ST. JOHN'S SCHOOL

HOUSTON, TEXAS

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THIRD PLACE WRITING

2026 BLUE AND GOLD AWARD

SHAWNEE MISSION EAST

HIGH SCHOOL

PRAIRIE VILLAGE, KANSAS

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FIRST PLACE VISUAL

2026 BLUE AND GOLD AWARD

SHAWNEE MISSION EAST

HIGH SCHOOL

PRAIRIE VILLAGE, KANSAS

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SECOND PLACE VISUAL

2026 BLUE AND GOLD AWARD

STRATH HAVEN HIGH SCHOOL

WALLINGFORD, PENNSYLVANIA

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THIRD PLACE VISUAL

2026 BLUE AND GOLD AWARD

FRANCIS HOWELL NORTH HIGH SCHOOL

ST. CHARLES, MISSOURI

QUILL & SCROLL
100th
Anniversary

FIRST PLACE MULTIMEDIA

2026 BLUE AND GOLD AWARD

FRANCIS HOWELL NORTH HIGH SCHOOL

ST. CHARLES, MISSOURI

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SECOND PLACE MULTIMEDIA

2026 BLUE AND GOLD AWARD

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC SCHOOL

MADISON, MISSISSIPPI

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THIRD PLACE MULTIMEDIA

2026 BLUE AND GOLD AWARD

CLARKE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

ATHENS, GEORGIA

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Anniversary

Writing

WVM 2026

Kingwood greets Shiloh Wilson on final ride home

Sydney Ortiz, Editor-in-Chief

July 12, 2025



Writing

News

FIRST PLACE

**Sydney Ortiz, Kingwood Park High School,
Kingwood, Texas**

“Sydney beautifully captures the heartbreak that this tragedy had on the community with this well-sourced and explained story. The emotion from the devastating scene could be felt on the page because of Sydney's vivid descriptions. Between quotes obtained from family, friends and other community members, plus other details reported on in the piece, readers can get a real sense of who the Wilsons were and how their deaths shattered Kingwood. Great work.”

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Four years after widespread book removals in Missouri, one district is seeing titles return to its schools. At Lindbergh, several books remain off shelves. Why?

2022: Missouri Senate Bill 775 is introduced to Congress by the bill's sponsor, Republican Sen. Holly Thompson Rehder. Photo courtesy of MO Senate.



Rehder and the bill's co-sponsor, Democratic Sen. Jill Schupp, carry it through Senate debates.

While on the Senate floor, Republican Sen. Rick Brattin and other members of the Conservative Caucus propose the book-restricting law as an amendment to add to the original bill.



Republican Gov. Mike Parson signs the bill, with the amendment, into law June of 2022.

Rehder does not approve of the amendment and says, in reference to the proposal, that the bill is being "hijacked by a few men who wanted to talk about another issue."

M

ISSOURI — A 2022 state

law that prohibited schools from providing books classified as "explicit sexual material" to students was overturned on Nov. 17, 2025, by Jackson County Circuit Court Judge J. Dale Youngs after a lawsuit filed on behalf of some Missouri librarians. The ruling applies only in the district where the circuit court is located and is still currently impacting Lindbergh High School.

Before it was struck down early last November, the law — Missouri Revised Statute 573.550, enacted through Senate Bill 775 — criminalized librarians, teachers and other school staff who made available materials containing visual depictions of sexually explicit acts. Violations would

be labeled a Class A misdemeanor and could result in up to one year in jail or a fine of up to \$2,000.

Following the law's enactment, 12 Missouri school districts removed 315 books from their shelves between July and December 2022, according to data published by St. Charles Community College. At Lindbergh High School, the removed titles included *The Handmaid's Tale*, *The Graphic Novel*, *The Sun and Her Flowers* and volumes one through four of *A Game of Thrones*, according to information obtained from the school through a Freedom of Information Act request submitted in November of 2022.

Lindbergh High School Director of Communications Beth Johnston said the district is closely monitoring the situation but must continue to follow state

10

Writing

News

SECOND PLACE

Mira Schoewe, Lily Donaldson, Lindbergh High School, St. Louis, Missouri

"I was impressed with how clearly the reporters mapped out what could be a confusing situation. Context is so important in news writing, which the authors here clearly understand."

Hayes, NHS Candidates Go “All-In” on Service Project

[Jake Bond](#), Staff Writer

February 16, 2025



[Jake Bond](#)

Junior George Besch deals at Claridge Court.

Writing

News

THIRD PLACE

Jake Bond, Rockhurst High School, Kansas City, Missouri

“I loved this story’s lead and the concise writing that followed throughout. Jake made great use of the sources and the story had a nice flow to it.”

QUILL & SCROLL
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Writing

News

HONORABLE MENTION

Angela Jia, Archbishop Riordan High School, San Francisco, California

Arielle Stopak, Georgetown Day School, Washington, D.C.

Audrey Lyons, Early Smith, Midtown High School, Atlanta, Georgia

Avery Fragale, Georgetown Day School, Washington, D.C.

Avni Bansal, Shawnee Mission East High School, Prairie Village, Kansas

Beatrix Lozach, McCallum High School, Austin, Texas

Daniella Lainez, Archbishop Riordan High School, San Francisco, California

Elizabeth Tuttle, Thomas Chen, St. Paul Academy and Summit School, St. Paul, Minnesota

Jacob Blane, Aliana Cromer, Georgetown Day School, Washington, D.C.

Writing

News

HONORABLE MENTION

Kelly Forbes, Lindbergh High School, St. Louis, Missouri

Kiley Huang, Kirkwood High School, Kirkwood, Missouri

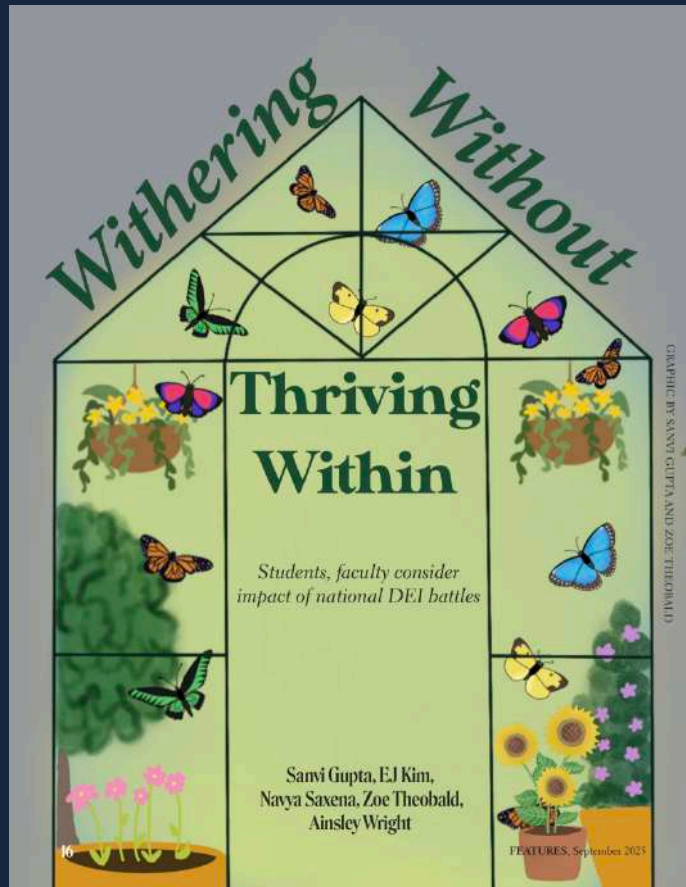
Lily Rantanen, Iowa City High School, Iowa City, Iowa

Lucca Fleenor, Cooper Jones, Clarke Central High School, Athens, Georgia

Megan Snyder, Kirkwood High School, Kirkwood, Missouri

**Sam Gross, Annabelle Garland, Aliana Cromer, Lucy Newman, Georgetown Day School,
Washington, D.C.**

Sophia Cui, Ashley Du, Erin Zhang, Conestoga High School, Berwyn, Pennsylvania



Writing

DEI-Social Justice

FIRST PLACE

Sanvi Gupta, EJ Kim, Navya Saxena, Zoe Theobald, Ainsley Wright, Adlai E. Stevenson High School, Lincolnshire, Illinois

“This story does a strong job exploring how national policy changes can impact students, even when schools themselves are not making changes. Opening with a student’s experience in a club creates a compelling entry point and helps set up the story effectively.”

The harsh realities of working women

GENEVIEVE EDERLE and AMINA KHALIL-ZEGAR • January 13, 2026

Seventeen-year-old Frankie tried her best to maintain a polite smile when rejecting a 56-year-old man who asked for her number at the gym she worked at. He wanted to reserve a tennis court date for the two of them. While startling and uncomfortable, this was not the first time Frankie found herself in this position at a workplace.

Many young high school women like Frankie, not her real name, look forward to getting their first jobs. One in every three American teenagers, ages 16 to 19, are active in the labor force. However, this time also introduces girls to the harsh realities of harassment in work spaces.

Frankie's friend Delilah, not her real name, hesitated to start working after hearing many of Frankie's horror stories. Delilah eventually decided to work at a local



Genevieve Ederle

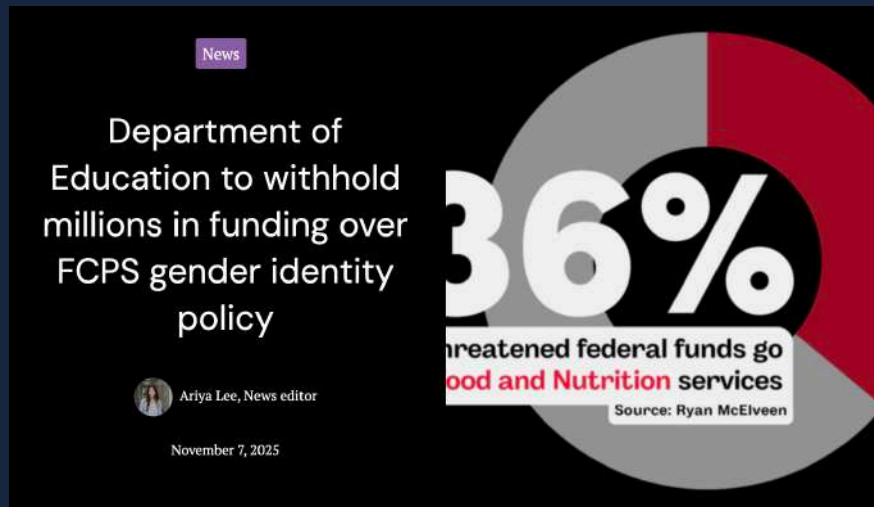
Writing

DEI-Social Justice

SECOND PLACE

Amina Khalil-Zegar, Genevieve Ederle, St. John's School, Houston, Texas

“Including multiple students who have experienced similar situations across different jobs shows how widespread the issue is. The reporter makes strong use of quotes to bring in student voices and add credibility. Overall, this is a well-organized and clearly written piece.”



Writing

DEI-Social Justice

THIRD PLACE

Ariya Lee, Chantilly High School, Chantilly, Virginia

“The story opens with clear news and context, which helps ground readers in the issue before introducing student perspectives. Bringing in student voices and how the district plans to respond afterward effectively illustrates the impact and adds depth to the reporting. The piece is well structured and easy to follow.”

Writing

DEI-Social Justice

HONORABLE MENTION

Preston Hooker, Shawnee Mission East High School, Prairie Village, Kansas

Rebecca Lopez, Westridge School, Pasadena, California

Sasha Pankuch, Oswego High School, Oswego, Illinois



Writing

Feature

FIRST PLACE

Sierra Pape, Fairlie Mercer, Farris Duwayri, Connie Erdozain, Midtown High School, Atlanta, Georgia

“Pape, Mercer, Duwayri and Erdozain do a perfect job of localizing a massive national story, giving it a unique angle. It’s clear how much research and sourcing went into this story. This is a model piece for detailing the lasting impact someone has on a community. Excellent work.”

Shifting policies: DEI reversals cause massive changes in universities



Mau Sanchez Carmona, Sports Editor • April 2, 2025

For seventy years, the United States has made several attempts to compensate for ongoing systemic injustice towards marginalized groups and races. The passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act advanced such trends by prohibiting the discrimination of race, gender and religion in the workplace.

Since then, companies nationwide have sought to diversify their workplace through inclusion programs like Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) that allowed people from all backgrounds to thrive in their place of business. Its implementation in businesses arose not from a desire from employers to meet hiring quotas, but to ensure that race or socioeconomic status does not hinder a qualified candidate's possibility of employment.



Students at Iowa State University meet, despite efforts from the school to dissolve DEI-oriented clubs. Photo Credit: Malinali Sanchez Carmona

Writing

Feature

SECOND PLACE

Mau Sanchez Carmona, Pleasant Valley High School, Bettendorf, Iowa

“Sanchez Carmona does a fantastic job localizing one of the biggest national topics. This is a great example of breaking down a complicated topic with statistics and numerous sources.”

December 2025

STEM

JUST SLEEP ON IT

Article by Sarah Zobel
 Edited by Aelin Garibay

There is an epidemic raging across the United States, and Trinity is not an exception. In a survey of 185 students, a little over 90% reported getting less than the nationally recommended 8-10 hours of sleep. While many students perceive this lack of sleep as a measure of success, sleep deprivation is associated with many negative health outcomes, from lack of focus to significant mental health complications. Going to bed earlier may seem like a simple solution, but this is easier said than done.

Genetics are responsible for up to 50% of the human chronotype, or the natural tendency to sleep or wake at a particular time, according to the Saxe Lab at Harvard. A person's chronotype is responsible for their circadian rhythm.

"The circadian rhythm is your body's internal clock... based on a 24-hour cycle," biology teacher Bryan Moretz said. "It's something that we've evolved over time to help protect us from the environment and make sure that we're functioning enough to survive, but also getting enough rest to recover."

Age is another uncontrollable influence of circadian rhythm as it causes a person's chronotype to shift over time. Children naturally have a chronotype favoring the morning, making them early birds, until adolescence, when their chronotype shifts in favor of the evening, peaking at 19 years old. Then, as a person ages, the chronotype gradually shifts earlier again. Because of this, teenagers are typically night owls by nature,

making it difficult for them to fall asleep and wake up early.

While it is natural for teens to struggle with an early bedtime, there are some lifestyle choices that exacerbate the problem.

be limited within one to two hours of bed, but many students rely on their laptops while working at night. Over 85% of Trinity students reported using their laptop or other electronic device within an hour of going to bed. At minimum, avoiding scrolling or other unnecessary electronic use before bed can be beneficial.

Proper light exposure in the morning can also help with regulation by alerting the brain that it is time to wake up. To help with this, certain companies have manufactured lights to mimic the bright morning sunlight.

"I have a 10,000-lux light that I use every morning," junior Thomas Hoskins said. "It's really interesting because I normally wake up really early, so I don't have light in the morning... (It helps) wake me up in the morning."

Increasing the light seen in the morning after waking up triggers the release of cortisol, the stress hormone, which increases the brain's alertness. This is linked with improved mood, energy and sleep quality.

Besides cortisol, melatonin is another naturally produced hormone that serves the opposite role in regulating the circadian rhythm: It tells the body when it is time to sleep. Chronically disrupting the release of melatonin, primarily by exposure to light at night, can lead to mood disorders, a weakened immune system and an increased risk of neurodegenerative conditions.

Nearly one in five teens routinely take melatonin supplements in an attempt to fall asleep earlier or increase sleep quality, according to The Washington Post, but oftentimes this is unnecessary.

"Light is the biggest thing that can influence your circadian rhythm," Moretz said. "Exposing yourself to light anytime as it gets darker, especially as you get closer to bedtime, is negatively impacting your sleep cycle and that circadian rhythm."

Light, especially blue light from computers, phones and other electronics, suppresses melatonin and shifts circadian rhythms by up to three hours, according to Harvard Health. It is recommended that exposure to blue light

Writing Feature

THIRD PLACE

Sarah Zobel, Trinity Preparatory School of Florida, Winter Park, Florida

"Zobel does a great job highlighting a problem that is relatable for many. Great use of statistics (loved the polling of Trinity) and credible sources. It's clear a lot of prep went into this piece. Story flows very well."

Writing

Feature

HONORABLE MENTION

Adah Hamman, Clarke Central High School, Athens, Georgia

Ava Novak, Bellaire High School, Bellaire, Texas

Beatrix Lozach, McCallum High School, Austin, Texas

Elizabeth Nation, McCallum High School, Austin, Texas

Emma Weintraub, Kaneland High School, Maple Park, Illinois

Fay Zhao, Trinity Preparatory School of Florida, Winter Park, Florida

Hayden Hunt, Southwest Career and Technical Academy, Las Vegas, Nevada

Lennon Riedie, Westlake High School, Austin, Texas

Writing

Feature

HONORABLE MENTION

Mali Clark, Midtown High School, Atlanta, Georgia

Mila Ellis, Gwynth Lee, Tselmeg Orgilmunkh, Mika Katznelson, Acalanes High School, Lafayette, California

Nadia Okilee, Francis Howell North High School, Saint Charles, Missouri

Nina Mast, Minnehaha Academy, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Rajasi Agarwal, Westlake High School, Austin, Texas

Rebecca Lopez, Westridge School, Pasadena, California

Sheridan Ruyle, Kirkwood High School, Kirkwood, Missouri

Sophie Katz, Shalhevet High School, Los Angeles, California

Writing

Feature

HONORABLE MENTION

**Veronica Jia, Harikesh Prasad, Amani Raza, Annabella Teng, Adlai E. Stevenson High School,
Lincolnshire, Illinois**

Yasmin Khan, St. Paul Academy and Summit School, St. Paul, Minnesota

Yi Di Mi, Shanghai, China



Chef cooks up cancer victory

Cameron Minatrea, Sports Editor · December 8, 2025



Cameron Minatrea

Chef Anthony Chevalier spent much of his second year leading the Culinary Arts program while also battling stage 4 prostate cancer.

Writing

Profile

FIRST PLACE

Cameron Minatrea, Kingwood Park High School, Kingwood, Texas

“Minatrea does an excellent job humanizing chef Anthony Chevalier. The piece flows well with vivid storytelling and strong quotes, and illustrates a personal struggle that many Americans can relate to with cancer. It’s a great profile that speaks to resilience, community support and passion.”



Double lung transplant gives Mills new life

Sydney Ortiz, Editor-in-Chief
January 27, 2026



Sydney Ortiz

Paraprofessional Brandy Mills continues teaching four years after undergoing a double lung transplant. Mills' lungs were severely damaged by a case of COVID in 2021.

Writing

Profile

SECOND PLACE

**Sydney Ortiz, Kingwood Park High School,
Kingwood, Texas**

“Ortiz does an excellent job of highlighting a truly emotional story. The writing is descriptive, with a lead that captures your attention immediately. Strong quotes from multiple sources add to the detailed storytelling.”

March 2025

Focus | 250

CAPTURE THE COSMOS

Freshman records stars and planets through astrophotography

Article by Fay Zhao

Photo Courtesy of Simar Kang

Freshman Simar Kang finds his usual spot in the darkness of the surrounding park and sets up his barlow lens, telescope and camera. Although he can not see much around him, the darkness is his friend, illuminating the faraway dance of stars and planets in the night sky.

"[When] I looked through it, I saw craters on the moon, the rings of Saturn and Jupiter's moons," Kang said. "And I was like 'Wow.'"

Recording pictures of the night sky is a frequent occurrence for Kang. But even before discovering astrophotography, he was fascinated by space.

"My first interactions with space pretty much began when I was around 6, and I saw a lunar eclipse," Kang said. "It was super cold out that night, and I looked and saw the moon turning. I thought that was really cool."

Interested in anything involving space, Kang stumbled upon a YouTube video by astrophotography channel "AstroBiscuit." The video opened a new world for Kang as he began exploring the ins and outs of capturing these celestial objects — first with the purchase of his own professional Dobsonian telescope.

"I pretty much discovered it on my own," Kang said. "I looked at their videos since they have quite a few tutorials. I took inspiration from those projects and also looked things up."

Since then, Kang has completed several

projects over the span of these three years and established his own techniques. Along with the Dobsonian telescope, he uses a dedicated astronomy camera (ZWO ASI 589 MC Pro), which attaches to the telescope. On top of his main equipment, a field flattener, which ensures no stars are stretched or blurry, and a detection device are necessary to accommodate for the rotating nature of Earth. With plenty of practice, dealing with these complex devices became routine.

"I've mastered processing techniques and such to really get what I want and keep all those [unnecessary] artifacts out," Kang said. "In general, set-up time has gotten a lot lower since I first started because you have muscle memory. As to what goes where, how to do everything, you pretty much have that all set in your brain."

Each project begins with Kang looking for targets on the astronomy app Stellarium. Usually, he has a period of two to three months in which he can best capture the target.

After scheduling the day, he heads out around 9 p.m. and images for around two to three hours during which the camera captures around 500 frames. From there, he transfers the information onto his computer, using a stacking software to combine them into one cohesive image.

While some photos come out well, others may feature an unexpected appearance of a white trail seemingly made by random satellites, rocket boosters or meteors captured in the moment.

"You can see all that data," Kang said. "I'm either like 'Really? Is that really all I got?' or 'Wow that looks great.' I was amazed that I got that data, especially from a light-polluted sky."

Sometimes in order to capture all the sufficient data, the capturing process may take days.

In Kang's upcoming project, he plans to capture the Crab Nebula



The "Helix Nebula" was Kang's most complex shot, taking three hours to image.

— a supernova remnant of a star that exploded in the 16th century — which will take over three nights in a total of nine hours to capture.

Along with the skill of shooting these frames, Kang found that the entire process of astrophotography also helped him embrace subjects that he never found much interest in — including math.

"I'm not someone that likes math, but some of this stuff requires an ethos, FOV calculating and seeing if your pixels are going to line up with the telescope," Kang said. "There's a bunch of formulas you have to do, and yeah, I stopped hating math."

But no matter how complicated the process is, Kang finds astrophotography as a labor of love in which he uncovers the remarkable place that is space.

"Just simply looking at people's pictures, seeing how beautiful space is, what sort of objects are just in the sky waiting to be seen and overall seeing those objects like the planet craters on the moon cemented the whole thing in my brain," Kang said.

In this photo, Kang captured the "Herschel and I Flame Nebulae" in the winter of 2024.

Writing

Profile

THIRD PLACE

Fay Zhao, Trinity Preparatory School of Florida, Winter Park, Florida

"Zhao's strong, descriptive writing pairs perfectly with a truly unique story, making this an excellent example of profile writing. There's a different angle to this story, which adds to the intrigue. Well done."

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Writing

Profile

HONORABLE MENTION

Aaron Lin, Ladue Horton Watkins High School, St. Louis, Missouri

Ayleen Bran, Van Nuys High School, Van Nuys, California

Charlene Li, The Harker School, San Jose, California

Emlyn McKinney, Clarke Central High School, Athens, Georgia

Josie Stout, Ladue Horton Watkins High School, St. Louis, Missouri

Lydia Gerety, Ankeny High School, Ankeny, Iowa

Mariam Darb, Midtown High School, Atlanta, Georgia

Saher Punshi, The American School in London, London, England

Sydney Ortiz, Kingwood Park High School, Kingwood, Texas

Unsigned: Our overconsumption of media seriously threatens media literacy

80 Views

December 11, 2025

Editorial Opinion Print Opinion



Delancy Zhao / The Spoke

Writing

Staff Editorial

FIRST PLACE

Staff, Conestoga High School, Berwyn, Pennsylvania

“The editorial makes it clear readers should be concerned about the fast-paced media consumption. The conclusion says this weakens readers’ attention spans, which makes it difficult for them to fully understand the news. Good job tying the conclusion to the lead.”

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Writing

Staff Editorial

SECOND PLACE

Editorial Board, The Harker School, San Jose, California

“A question lead draws the reader’s attention and the rest of the editorial provides solutions. A boxed in solution provides another suggestion.”

Toxic Behavior Has Consequences: SM East administration must punish students who spread negative comments at sports games

By Editorial Board

Posted December 1, 2025

Edited on 12-3-2025

*all slurs and crowd comments made were confirmed through video proof and first hand accounts.

*Fee-fi-fo-fum. Burger. Gorilla. McDonalds. F*gg*t.*

These were the fat-shaming and derogatory comments made by SM East students during the Kansas State High School Activities Association 6A soccer state championship game, directed towards the opposing Washburn Rural high school.

Writing

Staff Editorial

THIRD PLACE

**Editorial Staff, Shawnee Mission East High
School, Prairie Village, Kansas**

“A list of expressions at the beginning draws the reader’s attention, and the closing paragraph makes it clear how damaging the action was to the reputation of the school.”

Writing

Staff Editorial

HONORABLE MENTION

Celina Zhou, Ladue Horton Watkins High School, St. Louis, Missouri

Katherine Farmer, Eisenhower High School, Shelby Township, Michigan

Yasmin Khan, St. Paul Academy and Summit School, St. Paul, Minnesota

Expensive Thrill: Andretti Indoor Karting & Games was entertaining, but declared war on my wallet

By Alex Harden

Posted December 22, 2025

“Woohoo!” yelled a man who sped by me in his go-kart. I just got lapped.

I laid my heavy foot on the gas pedal, propelling myself around a tight corner. The sound of rubber burning against the track filled my ears.

“If everything seems under control, you’re not going fast enough,” the quote on the wall from Mario Andretti, the namesake of the Andretti Indoor Karting & Games in Overland Park that opened on Nov. 18., rang throughout my mind.

Writing

Review

FIRST PLACE

Alex Harden, Shawnee Mission East High School, Prairie Village, Kansas

“Reviewers need to establish their ethos right away, particularly when we publish rarely and the reviewer has not been able to develop a following. This go-cart review featured plenty of voice and personality, along with a clear narrative of the experience of patronizing the go-cart track. It was fun and appropriately snarky, personal but well-researched.”

Diane Keaton and the Greatest Final Shot of All Time

Farewell, You Wonderful Star

 Ben Haines, Reporter

October 14, 2025



Ben Haines

Photo courtesy of Paramount Studios and designed by Ben Haines.

Writing

Review

SECOND PLACE

Ben Haines, Iowa City High School, Iowa City, Iowa

“Ben's ethos is ‘film expert,’ and he does not feel restricted to new films for his analyses. This one was unexpected in its detail, yet perfectly timed due to the recent death of Diane Keaton. It was like a quick course in a college lecture on the history of film, with very tight focus on just a few minutes of screen time.”

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Wicked: Good riddance

Review of "Wicked: For Good"

Macy Langland, Entertainment Editor • Dec 26, 2025



"Wicked: For Good," one of the most anticipated films of 2025, hits theaters on Nov. 21, almost exactly a year after its predecessor, "Wicked." (Jessica Wang)

Writing

Review

THIRD PLACE

Macy Langland, Bellaire High School, Bellaire, Texas

“‘Wicked: For Good’ was a popular topic, and the reactions among student reviewers were as mixed as among professionals. But, let’s face it, the ‘fun’ in review writing tends to come in the ‘bad review’ area. Readers know what they are getting from the beginning but then are treated to lots of details that prove Macy’s claims. Her voice is brassy and engaging and she seemed to revel in her critique. That was welcome.”

Writing

Review

HONORABLE MENTION

Avni Bansal, Shawnee Mission East High School, Prairie Village, Kansas

Ayra Ansari, The American School in London, London, England

Ishika Desai, Raina Mishra, Pleasant Valley High School, Bettendorf, Iowa

Jasiek Bugaj, Lake Forest Academy, Lake Forest, Illinois

Raphael Shrier, YULA High School, Los Angeles, California

William Jiang, The Harker School, San Jose, California

Zoe Karibian, The American School in London, London, England



Three years after seizures, each day still feels like a miracle

Alex Pozzi, Special Contributor

December 12, 2025



Joshua Harris

Freshman Alex Pozzi's life changed forever during sixth grade when an illness threatened his life and landed him in the ER.

Writing

Column — Non Sports

FIRST PLACE

**Alex Pozzi, Kingwood Park High School,
Kingwood, Texas**

“‘Because once you’ve almost not been here, being here feels a bit like a miracle’ concludes this column. A near death story touches the readers emotions. That's a big plus for this column”

Personal Column

Make the Change

A personal statement about the death of a family member by suicide



Alex Duhon

September 29, 2025

Writing

Column — Non Sports

SECOND PLACE

**Alex Duhon, Little Rock Central High School,
Little Rock, Arkansas**

“It couldn't have been easy for the writer to talk about his father dying by suicide. He concluded by saying ‘it is never okay to not say anything about it,’ so he did in this column that touches on readers’ emotions.”

Diabetes Doesn't Define Me, But It's Shaped Who I Am: My Story for National Diabetes Awareness Month

Aimee Martinez, Staff Writer • November 13, 2025



Cynthia Martinez

Martinez at INTEGRIS Health Enid Hospital on the morning of March 4, 2017.

Writing

Column — Non Sports

THIRD PLACE

Aimee Martinez, Bishop McGuinness Catholic High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

“This story tugs should tug on readers hearts as they learn about the writer’s battle with diabetes. The writer makes it clear how dangerous diabetes can be and how difficult it is to live ‘a full and healthy life.’”

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Writing

Column — Non Sports

HONORABLE MENTION

Aly Dewey, Wando High School, Mount Pleasant, South Carolina

Christopher Long, Shawnee Mission East High School, Prairie Village, Kansas

Emma Benvenuto, Harrison High School, Kennesaw, Georgia

Jeffrey Heng, Conestoga High School, Berwyn, Pennsylvania

Lily Shi, The Harker School, San Jose, California

Macy Langland, Bellaire High School, Bellaire, Texas

Mahdi Abdallah, Francis Howell North High School, Saint Charles, Missouri

Nav Khaira, Huntley High School, Huntley, Illinois

Writing

Column — Non Sports

HONORABLE MENTION

Peter Atchley, Clarke Central High School, Athens, Georgia

Phoebe Fan, Westridge School, Pasadena, California

Samara Rowe, Shawnee Mission South High School, Overland Park, Kansas

SPORTS

UNC('s fans) needed this humbling

TCU completed a comprehensive victory over a Tar Heels squad stumbling for answers or excuses in their Monday loss.

DEOLU AKINGBADE
SEP 03, 2025



Share



Bill Belichick confronts a UNC player during Monday's 48-14 loss to TCU. (Photo by Jared C. Tilton/Getty Images)

Writing

Sports Column

FIRST PLACE

**Deolu Akingbade, Davidson Day School,
Davidson, North Carolina**

“Akingbade’s writing is excellent. The piece flows incredibly well with descriptive writing, a passionate voice and crystal-clear points of emphasis. It’s conversational, but also educational. This is a high-level column following a sporting event.”

Prodigy to price tag

School athletics plagued by illegal recruitment, money

Fletcher Vandegrift, sports editor • January 16, 2026



Fletcher Vandegrift

Image of a soccer ball drowning in a pile of money.

Writing

Sports Column

SECOND PLACE

**Fletcher Vandegrift, McCallum High School,
Austin, Texas**

“Vandegrift does an excellent job localizing one of the biggest national stories in NIL, clearly laying out why this is an issue. Solutions are mapped out nicely, and Vandegrift does an excellent job explaining points throughout the piece.”

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Sports knowledge not limited to boys

[Sydney Ortiz](#), Editor-in-Chief

December 6, 2025



Junior Sydney Ortiz awaits the start of the Astros-Dodgers game at Minute Maid Park on July 26, 2024. She has attended four Dodgers games in the last two years between stops in Houston, St. Louis and Los Angeles. Photo submitted by Sydney Ortiz.

Writing

Sports Column

THIRD PLACE

**Sydney Ortiz, Kingwood Park High School,
Kingwood, Texas**

“Ortiz does an excellent job articulating her stance with strong writing. A personal story leads the column, and it all flows well. And Ortiz closes the piece nicely with strong conviction.”

Writing

Sports Column

HONORABLE MENTION

Sammy Lou, Trinity Preparatory School of Florida, Winter Park, Florida



Writing

In-Depth Reporting/Individual

FIRST PLACE

Bella Dodig, Lee Monistere, St. John's School, Houston, Texas

“The reporters here did a wonderful job of both reporting on the aftermath of this tragic event and providing context as to the camp's history and now-complicated reputation. Each interview and statement felt perfectly placed and necessary on the page. The pain from all involved could be felt. That is a credit to your writing, reporting and overall thoroughness of coverage on a topic that really needed it. You should be proud.”

QUILL & SCROLL
100th
Anniversary

Disintegrating Support: Teachers are experiencing burnout due to district oversight, large class sizes, student disrespect and AI Usage

By Christopher Long

Posted December 1, 2025

*Names are changed to protect identity

The blank stares of 25 students were the last thing she needed. For months, teacher *Amber Konrad had been struggling. Struggling with the question of: *Does anyone care if I try?*

"I felt like no one saw me and no one recognized what I was going through," Konrad said. "Admin tells us all these nice things about how much they like us and appreciate us, and blah, blah, blah, but [they've] actually never, ever come up to me and told me I'm doing a good job."

Students? Treated her class as a chore.

Writing

In-Depth Reporting/Individual

SECOND PLACE

Christopher Long, Shawnee Mission East High School, Prairie Village, Kansas

"Great, engaging lead that perfectly sets up the rest of his much-needed story. Christopher smartly incorporates local data and compares to national trends, and backs the numbers up with candid interviews with teachers that perfectly highlight their struggles. This story has a real voice to it, which is a credit to the writing and reporting."

QUILL & SCROLL
100th
Anniversary



Writing

In-Depth Reporting/Individual

THIRD PLACE

Liza Larson, Clarke Central High School, Athens, Georgia

“Unfortunately, this type of reporting is probably necessary at every school in America. What Liza provided here through thorough reporting and clear writing is an in-depth resource for students to know how they are being protected and why, at least to some of the many interviewed for this piece, the school still has a ways to go. Nice job compiling sources and data into a story that is well explained and executed.”

QUILL & SCROLL
100th
Anniversary

FEATURE SHOWCASE

Best of SNO

Targeted: New Evaluation System Drops All ICCSD High Schools' Ratings

In 2024, the Iowa Department of Education changed the way it rated schools. City High, "Commendable" in 2023, is now classified as "Needs Improvement"



Tai Caputo and Lily Rantanen

February 28, 2025

Writing

In-Depth Reporting/Team

FIRST PLACE

Lily Rantanen, Tai Caputo, Iowa City High School, Iowa City, Iowa

"Great depth in this piece. Admirably, the writers leave their school's campus and include other schools for context that exposes jaw-dropping information about how schools get rated for the state's Department of Education Performance Profiles: The story points out why the rankings are important and includes this bombshell: No 5A high schools in the state were considered 'High-Performing' or 'Exceptional' and only one of the 36 5A high schools rated above 'Acceptable.' First-rate reporting and well-written."

QUILL & SCROLL
100th
Anniversary

UNDER THE GUN



Writing

In-Depth Reporting/Team

THIRD PLACE

Wyatt Meyer, Jane Ripps, Clarke Central High School, Athens, Georgia

“Excellent detail with strong writing. This story was a clear contender because of its focus on a serious health matter facing school students, faculty and staff. An important story, for certain.”

History Magazine

Best of SNO

What Are You Losing?

Without enough fuel, female athletes may lose more than just their period or a few pounds — they lose aspects of their performance too.

Words by Ella Mohr • February 20, 2025 • 164 Views

Writing

Sports Feature

FIRST PLACE

**Ella Mohr, duPont Manual High School,
Louisville, Kentucky**

“Ella does a good job combining a variety of quoted sources with accurate and relevant research, making this a well-rounded and detailed story. I enjoyed the way she weaved in real-life experiences with statistics and balanced the story well between quotes and reporting. Great job!”

QUILL & SCROLL
100th
Anniversary

NEWS: SPORTS

Scull Work



by Clara Tripp

June 20, 2025

Why you can trust The Current

Garrison rower in elite company

Every year, as many as 300,000 spectators flock to the banks of the Charles River in eastern Massachusetts to cheer on some 2,000 boats at the Head of the Charles. As one of the largest and most prestigious rowing competitions, the regatta is notoriously difficult to enter.

Writing

Sports Feature

SECOND PLACE

**Clara Tripp, Highlands Current, Cold Spring,
New York**

“Clara’s writing used first-hand accounts from her subject and in-depth research and reporting to tell a unique, exciting and comprehensive story about rowing. As someone unfamiliar with the sport, the implications and reporting were easy to understand and the writing was a joy to read. Great job!”

QUILL & SCROLL
100th
Anniversary

The rise of ice fishing

Ice fishing is becoming more popular for all generations

By Danielle Hobbie

TAJOM STAFF WRITER

It's a Saturday morning in December. Senior Max Krumm and junior Reier Skarning have just picked up their fresh bait, driving onto Eagle Lake's solid ice, they unpack and ready their supplies.

As they drill their hole for the day, they reference a fish finder that shows where the fish are moving underneath the ice. Setting up their temporary tent, they are now ready to sit back, relax, and fish.

As many individuals experiment with ice fishing, since Thanksgiving, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has sold upwards of 55,500 fishing licenses, which is the highest it's been since the 2015 to 2016 season according to MN DNR.

With climate change being the leading cause, the last couple of winters have been on the warmer side – with last year's winter being the warmest on record.

As a result, the ice has been thinner and too dangerous to stand on for long periods of time, and the ice fishing seasons have been significantly shortened.

This year's winter temperatures were colder, allowing many anglers to resume one of their favorite pastimes – ice fishing.

Some of Minnesota's most treasured lakes have been decorated with makeshift huts, hoses, and tents. Sitting around the drilled holes, anglers of all ages bond over their shared love for this winter weather activity.

"Last year I rarely went because the ice wasn't thick enough," said Krumm, a fishing enthusiast. "Now me and Reier go at least once a week."

Back in action, many existing fishermen or those new to the sport have needed to stock up on supplies, leaving outdoor sporting goods stores with empty shelves and freezers.

Joe's Sporting Goods in St. Paul, a popular Minnesota-based company, has also experienced a sudden increase in ice fishing.

"Some of the live bait has been a little tough to get," said Doug Stahly, the fishing equipment buyer at Joe's.

The demand for live bait is due to the lack of stores that carry it, as it needs to be restocked multiple times a week.

"There's only so many people that provide live bait," said Stahly. "With so many people fishing, we go through it a little quicker."

But due to the predicted conditions of this winter, Joe's stays prepared, continuing to buy extra stock from the manufacturers.

"Manufacturers have a lot,

so we've been continuously re-ordering and filling things in," said Stahly.

As ice fishing grows more popular, many individuals wonder what the factors are that cause people to return to the sport year after year, and how people have the patience to sit and wait for a fish that might never come.

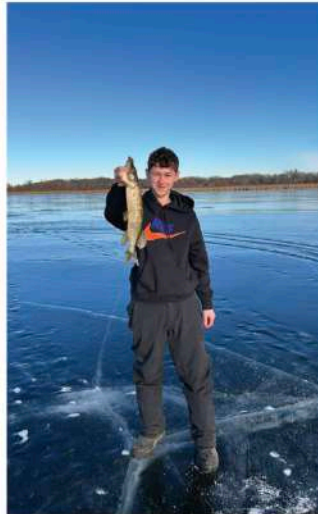
Getting to play cards and hang out with friends, Minnehaha film teacher Nicholas Freeman feels it's more about the people you're with that make it enjoyable, not the number of fish you catch.

"It's more of a getaway than anything else," said Freeman. "The experience is fun because for me it's not about fishing and feeding my family."

From a student perspective, first-year Myles Anderson finds the passing time of ice fishing rather tranquil, and fun to spend with family.

"It's actually very peaceful, being in front of nature," said Anderson.

Whether it's the thrill in waiting for a tug on the line, the adventure of trekking out onto the ice and setting up camp, or the camaraderie of the activity altogether, the art of ice fishing has and will continue to be a crowd favorite for the Midwesterners during the long, frigid winter season. Especially when we have a long, frigid winter.



Junior Reier Skarning holds a Northern pike he caught while ice fishing with senior Max Krumm at Pike Lake in Plymouth in late January. The two Minnehaha students ice fish together frequently during winters.

Writing

Sports Feature

THIRD PLACE

Danielle Hobbie, Minnehaha Academy, Minneapolis, Minnesota

"I really enjoyed the visual storytelling of this piece, with observations and anecdotes added organically to convey the popularity of ice fishing. That, combined with solid research and quotes from a variety of sources, make this a fantastic story. Good job!"

Writing

Sports Feature

HONORABLE MENTION

Aien Du, Sarah Nguyen, St. John's School, Houston, Texas

Bella Dodig, Eshna Das, St. John's School, Houston, Texas

Caleb Kazeem, Kingwood Park High School, Kingwood, Texas

Fajr Abdeldayem, Annie Eubanks, Little Rock Central High School, Little Rock, Arkansas

Gabe Cohen, Brimmer and May School, Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts

Grace Pei, Shawnee Mission East High School, Prairie Village, Kansas

Kane Manfull, Francis Howell North High School, Saint Charles, Missouri

Liya Taylor, Clarke Central High School, Athens, Georgia

Writing

Sports Feature

HONORABLE MENTION

Madeleine Stastny, Lake Forest Academy, Lake Forest, Illinois

Rohan Kavuru, St. Paul Academy and Summit School, St. Paul, Minnesota

Sam Li, Grace Wu, The Harker School, San Jose, California

Wes Euthon, Wando High School, Mount Pleasant, South Carolina

Game Coverage: 59th Classic City Championship

August 18, 2025



Writing

Sports Game/Event

FIRST PLACE

Liya Taylor, Kye Streetman, Clarke Central High School, Athens, Georgia

“This story includes evocative, lively language that drives the narrative forward. The writing is clear, and it captures the key action of the game well.”

QUILL & SCROLL
100th
Anniversary

Sports

Pirates edge Hawklets in heartbreaking District Championship, 29-22

[Jack Grisolano](#), Staff Reporter

December 1, 2025

Platte County's senior quarterback Rocco Marriott scored on a one-yard run in the final seconds of the fourth quarter to lift the Pirates past the Hawklets 29-22 in the Class 5 District 8 championship game on Nov. 14, 2025. It was a back-and-forth battle defined by turnovers, momentum swings and relentless fight on the part of both teams.

Rockhurst, playing away from home for the first time this postseason, opened the night with a dominant defensive start, intercepting Marriott, a Central Florida (UCF) commit, on the first two drives.

On Platte County's first pass attempt of the game, junior cornerback Blake Thomas jumped an out route for an interception, setting up the Hawklets at the Pirates' 29-yard line. Junior running back Cash Lewandowski started the offensive possession with an electric 24-yard run, but the drive eventually stalled out inside the five. The Hawklets had to settle for a chip-shot field goal from sophomore Connor Devereux, giving Rockhurst an initial 3-0 lead.

Writing

Sports Game/Event

SECOND PLACE

Jack Grisolano, Rockhurst High School, Kansas City, Missouri

“This piece centers around a thorough recounting of the key moments and details in the game in an effort to make them feel alive for the reader.”

QUILL & SCROLL
100th
Anniversary

Chaps Make Last-Second Push to Playoffs

Varsity soccer does just enough in last two games to qualify for state playoffs

Miles Strelitz • March 14, 2025



Writing

Sports Game/Event

THIRD PLACE

Miles Strelitz, Westlake High School, Austin, Texas

“This piece follows a simple story arc to help the reader better understand how the team made the playoffs. The details and quotes allow the piece to come alive.”

Writing

Sports Game/Event

HONORABLE MENTION

Grace Bui, Ainsley Wright, Adlai E. Stevenson High School, Lincolnshire, Illinois

Tricia Darcy, Kingwood Park High School, Kingwood, Texas

History Magazine

Fight or Flight

Louisville's immigrant students speak out in the wake of President Donald Trump's mass deportations.

Words by Isabella Shory • May 21, 2025 • 315 Views

Pseudonyms are used for the names of students in this article.

Writing

Political

FIRST PLACE

**Isabella Shory, duPont Manual High School,
Louisville, Kentucky**

“The reporter did an excellent job localizing and putting a face on the deportation crisis in America. Readers could feel the fear from the students who were worried about what would happen to them. She also brought depth to the story through her other engaging interviews — counselor, college student working with immigrants, etc. This story shows the impact of the president’s action on the local community. Nicely done.”

QUILL & SCROLL
100th
Anniversary



Writing

Political

THIRD PLACE

Sierra Pape, Connie Erdozain, Midtown High School, Atlanta, Georgia

“These two reporters covered this story like the professionals. The funding cuts was a huge local issues for this school and city, and the impact is worldwide. I was impressed at how the reporters interview a variety of CDC workers and explained the impact of the cuts on the U.S. The in-depth story flowed well and was filled with meaningful and powerful quotes. While I am not a fan of anonymous sources — I understood why it was important for this story.”

QUILL & SCROLL
100th
Anniversary

Writing

Political

HONORABLE MENTION

Fiona Treiber, Pleasant Valley High School, Bettendorf, Iowa

Isla Utterback, Munster High School, Munster, Indiana

Kristin Chuang, Westridge School, Pasadena, California

Michael Yi, Shawnee Mission East, Prairie Village, Kansas

Priya Thoppil, McCallum High School, Austin, Texas


Tvisha Jani, Conestoga High School, Berwyn, Pennsylvania

Zoey Srote, Siya Taneja, Marquette High School, Chesterfield, Missouri

Best of SNO

Energy drink craze

Love 'em or hate 'em, energy drinks are only growing in popularity

 Marie Wakefield, Staff Writer · November 10, 2025



Energy drinks fill many of the trash cans throughout Kingwood Park because of the popularity amongst students.

Writing

Health, Science and Agriculture

FIRST PLACE

**Marie Wakefield, Kingwood Park High School,
Kingwood, Texas**

“Opening with a personal anecdote before zooming out to the wider school community helps show just how widespread energy drink use is while also demonstrating the impact on an individual. The story uses research and interviews to effectively explain how, despite the health risks, energy drinks are continuing to grow in popularity.”

QUILL & SCROLL
100th
Anniversary

Crozer Health closure impacts community, affects students

After the healthcare provider and employer closed, former employees find themselves struggling to find new employment, and the community struggles to make up for the loss of services.

Lavanya Dixit '27, Health and Sciences Editor • Sep 26, 2025



Lavanya Dixit '27

Crozer's abrupt closure left the community with many gaps to fill. The community is looking for ways to make up for the absence of the healthcare center.

Writing

Health, Science and Agriculture

SECOND PLACE

Lavanya Dixit, Siya Goindi, Strath Haven High School, Wallingford, Pennsylvania

“Great job covering the impact of a hospital’s closing. The article addressed the effect on the school and community. Nice work here.”



Writing

Health, Science and Agriculture

THIRD PLACE

Shaivi Moparthy, Kinkaid Prep School, Houston, Texas

“The lead effectively sets the scene by showing how easily AI can be used in the classroom before explaining how prominent it has become. The story also makes great use of quotes, especially from students, to further explain the impact and why students should care.”

Writing

Health, Science and Agriculture

HONORABLE MENTION

Natalia Sanchez, Archbishop Riordan High School, San Francisco, California

Safa Saedi, duPont Manual High School, Louisville, Kentucky

Commitments to change: District, community collaboration on environmental efforts



Lily Chen, Vanessa Chen, and Ashley Du • 193 Views

March 21, 2025

Front Page

News

Print News

During spring 2020, then-sophomore Aishi Debroy founded Sunrise Berwyn, a local chapter of an organization called Sunrise Movement dedicated to involving young people in fighting global climate change. Her goal was simple: to raise awareness about the climate crisis and advocate for sustainability in the local community.

Writing

Climate and Environment

SECOND PLACE

Lily Chen, Vanessa Chen, Ashley Du, Conestoga High School, Berwyn, Pennsylvania

“Long, ambitious and tortuous article about youth advocacy, sustainability and just how hard it is to address wasteful systems and make progress. Many are quoted in this story, yet it’s easy to follow the narrative. Especially inspiring was learning how the older students were helping lower level schools improve, too. This tale should help other schools and school systems navigate their journey toward a lighter footprint.”

QUILL & SCROLL
100th
Anniversary

Cities are sinking: a natural phenomenon across America

[Ava Mitchell](#)

January 5, 2026



[Ava Mitchell](#)

WATER DAMAGE: A house in New Orleans destroyed by Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

Writing

Climate and Environment

THIRD PLACE

Ava Mitchell, Midtown High School, Atlanta, Georgia

“Terrific read about a venerable city imperiled due to a convoluted cauldron of problems, mostly human-created. The author chose an array of people to interview, telling a complicated tale in a professional manner. The article cast a light on vulnerable populations as well. Excellent work!”

QUILL & SCROLL
100th
Anniversary

UNMATCHED RELEASE

**Boarders provide a window
into skating life, freedom**

Noah Iverson
Editor in Chief

I have had a rough day, but senior Hewitt Durand knows that the moment he sets his worn, but sturdy, black skateboard's weathered grey wheels onto the skate park's cool concrete, that all his worries will dissipate.

Durand first developed his interest in skateboarding in his home city before moving to Charleston.

"I got a skateboard when I was an eighth grader, in 2020, and I was still living in Seattle, Washington, at the time, and I had just joined this band, right, and the bassist, he was a skateboarder," Durand said. "It was around this time, too, I'd watched *Back to the Future*, and I don't know if you've watched it, but there's a scene where the Marty McFly is towed on the back of a car and he's... on a skateboard and I was like... that's super cool, I wanna do that."

Durand's new hobby carried many mental health benefits for him.

"I will feel like a sense of calm when I'm skating, like I'm just like, I'll put my earbuds in, I'll just start skating around, doing tricks, and... it'll ease me," Durand said. "If I'm worried about anything [before], it's like whenever I was worried about will just... dissipate."

Learning to skate in the midst of the pandemic also provided an escape from the problems caused by COVID-19.

"It can definitely be a stress relief, if you know what I mean... Like I remember in the pandemic... I couldn't really talk to anyone, it [had] really been a while since I had seen a lot of my friends face to face and so... I used skateboarding as a way to forget that even for just like a few hours," Durand said.

Durand used skateboarding as an opportunity to calm himself while also having the option to make some social connections after the pandemic ended.

"My friend Jonathan, he's graduated now, but Jonathan LaFortune... when I moved here, he's one of the first skateboarders I

met and we happened to have a lot of mutual friends, so like we just... kind of bonded," Durand said.

Science teacher Joshua Driscoll understands that although it is a positive release, skateboarding certainly presents its challenges.

"[Learning] hurts. Like, you fall... everyone knows concrete hurts... there is a learning curve where you just get kind of broke off a little bit, trying new tricks, you know, you land on your tricks, your prime... you roll your ankles, you hit the ground," Driscoll said. "I actually overuse so I can skate... I want to stay in shape to skateboard because the activity of skateboarding and pushing yourself and just pure resilience, like determination."

Through the pain, success grows, and pride arises.

"I landed this trick last week and I've watched the clip back probably a hundred times. I was so proud of myself for landing it. I was so happy and I was watching like the frame by frame, like scrolling my finger to look at every part of it... Cause I was just... thrilled and [there is] a sense of accomplishment that comes with that," Driscoll said. "That was the whole point. That's why skateboarding is so much fun."

Jake Lightheart, a worker at SK& Charleston, has gotten his to teach all different types of skateboarders the ropes.

"Skateboarding... anyone can do it, like I've seen people of all ages, orientations, and skill level... I have noticed that I skate with some of them are in their 40s, 50s, even 60s that started their whole life and like some people at the park they're in like middle school... it's just crazy to see. Anyone can get into it and just take off with it," Lightheart said.

Skateboarding can translate from the skate park to a skater's life.

"[Skateboarding is] freedom... there's no rules... I can't walk down King Street in Charleston without seeing a ledge or like seeing a gap that I want to take... it just... unlocks [that] level of creativity... no one's gonna tell you the right or wrong way to do really anything in skating, and I think that level of freedom is what carries over in the rest of your life," Driscoll said.

Design // *Kenneth Rowers*
Photo // *Noah Iverson*

Winter 2025 11

Writing

News Writer of the Year

FIRST PLACE

Noah Iverson, Wando High School, Mount Pleasant, South Carolina

"Noah's deep dive into the problem of developmental sprawl and gentrification in the greater Charleston, South Carolina community was colorfully written, but also well researched. His sources included a real estate agent, the mayor of a local town and an environmental activist, resulting in a balanced but nuanced look into the issue."

QUILL & SCROLL
100th
Anniversary



December 2025

STEM

CLIMATE CHANGE CRISIS

Article by Janav Ramprakash
Graphics by Maxi de la Fuente and Natalie Baron

In the heart of Florida, what was once a refuge of endless summer is now a frontline in the climate change crisis. In late October, AP News reported that Central Florida saw nearly 20 inches of rain within 24 hours, comparable to what the region saw from Hurricane Ian in 2022. Many homes were flooded, water systems were damaged and several roads had collapsed, forcing widespread closures. These rains were largely a result of climate change, where rising global temperatures intensify storms and amplify their destruction.

Florida's low-lying land and long coastlines further heightens these risks, as sea levels rise and floods push inland. For communities across the state, the consequences of climate change are beginning to take hold as its effects unfold in real time.

ENVIRONMENTAL

As Florida's climate continues to warm, the state is expected to face more extreme weather patterns, similar to the floods from October. "When it's supposed to be cold, it's going to be more intensely cold," science teacher Emily Massey-Burmeister said. "When it's supposed to be warm, it's going to be more intensely

warm. When it's supposed to be raining, we're going to see more intense rainfall."

This extreme weather will become increasingly threatening to Florida's ecosystems, especially in coastal areas.

"Sea level rise is going to impact coastal communities and areas," Massey-Burmeister said. "More intense storm surge is going to lead to more flooding occurring around those coastal regions."

Increased flooding also raises the risk of invasive species spreading and forcing wildlife into new areas.

"You're going to start causing species to migrate into higher elevations," science teacher Brandon McDermid said. "It would mean they're encroaching on other territories they aren't normally supposed to be in."

Additionally, ocean ecosystems are facing pressure as pH levels become more acidic, endangering coral reefs and the vast number of species that depend on them.

"The pH is going to get out of a range to where the coral is going to die off," McDermid said. "Coral is a biosphere in itself (and) a total food chain where all these animals rely (on it) not only for shelter, but for food. And if they die off, then all of those animals follow behind them."

This loss of biodiversity extends beyond the ocean too. As climate change rapidly alters other habitats, many species across Florida will struggle to survive.

INFRASTRUCTURE

As the floods that occurred in Central Florida destroyed key infrastructure, such as roads and water systems, they also highlighted the need to update and improve existing systems.

"Some of the systems we've built in the past to withstand flooding are very outdated now," Massey-Burmeister said. "And because sea level rise has occurred, you're going to have to start seeing either communities or the federal government start to invest more in fixing what we currently have."

Without these improvements, regions at high risk of flooding, particularly coastal cities, could face even more severe consequences.

"As the seas become warmer, it's melting the polar ice caps, and those polar ice caps are filling the ocean," McDermid said. "So places like Miami and South Florida are slowly going underwater."

Climate change also threatens public funding for infrastructure. The Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) stated that Florida coastal counties could lose over \$100 million in property taxes due to flooding, a number expected to reach nearly



Writing

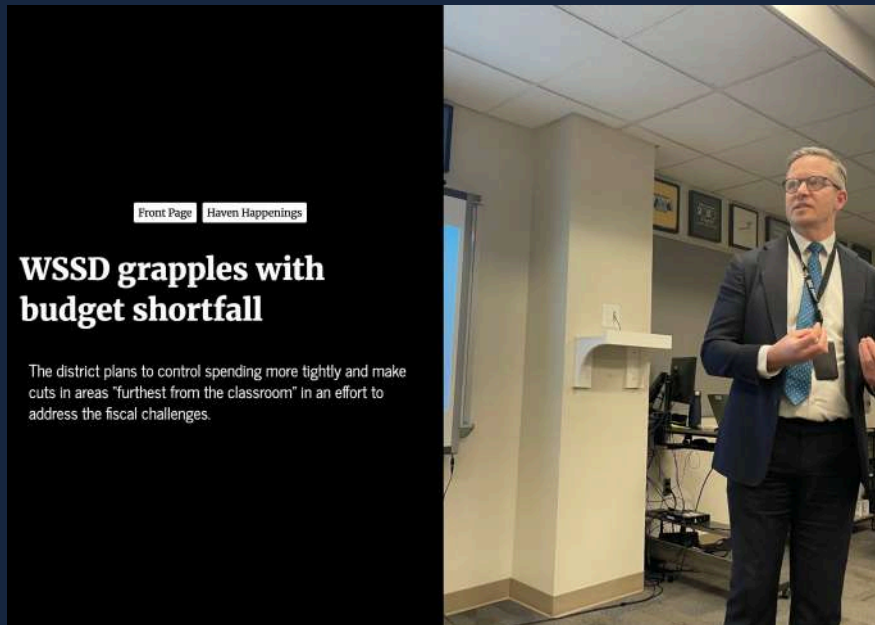
News Writer of the Year

SECOND PLACE

Janav Ramprakash, Trinity Preparatory School of Florida, Winter Park, Florida

"Janav took a close look at how climate change is affecting Florida, delivering not only into the environmental aspects of the problem, but the financial and psychological problems Floridians will be facing in the coming years."

QUILL & SCROLL
100th
Anniversary



Writing

News Writer of the Year

THIRD PLACE

**Clark Kerksta, Strath Haven High School,
Wallingford, Pennsylvania**

“Clark was able to take potentially boring subjects — the school board budget and a ban on phones — and lift them up through terrific reporting and colorful writing.”

Writing

News Writer of the Year

HONORABLE MENTION

Marie Wakefield, Kingwood Park High School, Kingwood, Texas

The Last Generation to be Heard: Honoring Holocaust Survivor Gabriella Karin

Micki M., Junior Staffer • December 13, 2025



Finley N.

As Holocaust survivors pass from living memory into history, their stories are entrusted to the next generation—hands that must carry what voices soon cannot.

Writing

Beginning Writer

FIRST PLACE

**Micki Mermelstein, Westridge School,
Pasadena, California**

“Micki’s writing exemplifies empathetic, student-led storytelling that honors vital historical narratives and fosters community connection. The article ‘The Last Generation to Be Heard: Honoring Holocaust Survivor Gabriella Karin’ thoughtfully preserves survivor testimonies, ensuring stories of resilience amid the Holocaust are amplified for future generations.”

QUILL & SCROLL
100th
Anniversary



Military Mavs: Students pursue path to service

PAYTON TU, Staff Writer
September 11, 2025



Courtesy of Kori Hagins

Senior Kori Hagins attended the Summer Leaders Experience to explore cadet life and build connections at the United States Military Academy.

Writing

Beginning Writer

SECOND PLACE

Payton Tu, St. John's School, Houston, Texas

“Payton’s writing shines with vivid detail and a keen eye for human stories behind everyday operations. Her contributions demonstrate impressive maturity, empathy and narrative flair, making complex processes engaging.”

QUILL & SCROLL
100th
Anniversary

“No Kings” protest returns to Louisville as the nationwide movement continues to grow



Sarah Aleissa • March 29, 2026

On March 28, 2026, over **hundreds** of protestors gathered in downtown Louisville for the third time in one of the thousands of “No Kings” protests **held** across the nation.

“No Kings” is a national movement opposing President Donald Trump and his administration’s policies. This round of protests aimed to unite millions across the nation to challenge Trump’s actions, such as expanding executive power and enforcing stricter immigration policies.

Participants of the “No Kings” movement have described it as a response to what they believe is a breach of executive power and a weakening of the U.S.’ democratic system meant to



On March 28, 2026, protestors gathered in downtown Louisville for the third “No Kings” protest as part of a nationwide movement.

Writing

Beginning Writer

THIRD PLACE

**Sarah Aleissa, duPont Manual High School,
Louisville, Kentucky**

“Sarah’s writing demonstrates thoughtful, socially conscious journalism that tackles complex global issues with maturity and care. Her piece on the impact of journalists’ deaths in Gaza and the West Bank shows a strong sense of courage, empathy and a commitment to amplifying silenced voices.”

Writing

Beginning Writer

HONORABLE MENTION

Alex Harden, Shawnee Mission East High School, Prairie Village, Kansas

QUILL & SCROLL
100th
Anniversary

Visual

WVM 2026



Visual

Breaking News

FIRST PLACE

**Will Griffith, Shawnee Mission East High School,
Prairie Village, Kansas**

“This is a strong storytelling image. Excellent composition with lots of crucial elements in the frame. I appreciated the contrast between the fun of the bubbles and the heated emotions of the protestors. Nice perspective and making sure you used the sky to your advantage as a neutral background. Good color balance.”



Visual

Breaking News

SECOND PLACE

Kate Jensen, Kirkwood High School, Kirkwood, Missouri

“Well-cropped image — I love how you included the word murder. It’s great to single out an individual here, yet we can still see others in the frame, giving the photo context. Love that you waited for something to happen.”



Visual

Breaking News

THIRD PLACE

**Matteo Ventresca, Strath Haven High School,
Wallingford, Pennsylvania**

“The photographer was ready, waited for a moment and was rewarded with an excellent reaction shot. The photographer smartly positioned himself so that we can see faces. Photo has good exposure in a challenging lighting situation. While I would have liked for the ceiling be cropped out a bit, I appreciated the angle of the shot.”



Visual

Feature

FIRST PLACE

Tyler Russell, Shawnee Mission East High School, Prairie Village, Kansas

“With masterful use of composition elements and perspective, this photo grabs the viewers’ attention and heartstrings and makes them want to know more about the subject. The photographer used depth of field to blur the passersby, emphasizing the stillness of the man who appears to be sleeping. Placing him in the rule of thirds and using the lines of the building to direct us to him adds to the dynamics of the composition. The black and white treatment adds to the stark reality of the man's story.”



Visual

Feature

SECOND PLACE

Lixin Peng, Cate School, Carpinteria, California

“Great use depth of field and action in the braided ponytail. Captivating image that brings you into the photo.”



Visual

Feature

THIRD PLACE

**Joseph Ji, Lakefield College School, Lakefield,
Ontario**

“Beautiful image that captivates the audience. The image flows in the folds of the skirt. Would have loved to see a little more of the subject’s face.”

Visual

Feature

HONORABLE MENTION

Ezra Victor, Minnehaha Academy, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Han Jiayi, Emma Willard School, Troy, New York

Han Jiayi, Emma Willard School, ,

Kairui Sun, The Harker School, San Jose, California

Katie Labao, Westridge School, Pasadena, California

Luke Ye, Ladue Horton Watkins High School, St. Louis, Missouri



Visual

Sports Action

FIRST PLACE

**Taylor Griffin, Francis Howell North High School,
St. Charles, Missouri**

“The combination of dramatic lighting, emotion and technical excellence wins every time. This image has it all. Warm light provides an attention getting, vivid color balance. The photographer masterfully used a fast shutter speed and wide aperture so we can see the dust suspended in mid air and the ball still in the catcher’s hand. The timing is impeccable to be able to capture the intensity on the runner’s face. Congratulations for beautifully capturing an intense moment!”

QUILL & SCROLL
100th
Anniversary



Visual

Sports Action

SECOND PLACE

**Vivian Akers, Rockwood Summit High School,
Fenton, Missouri**

“Great photographs make the viewer feel something. The discomfort of the unfortunate competitor who is locked up is effortlessly and immediately communicated to the viewer. This emotion is also spotlighted because the rest of the image is so simply composed and exposed. There are no distractions present in the dark, blurry background. Good aperture, ISO and shutter speed balance. We simply can focus on the wrestler's agonized face. Yes!”

QUILL & SCROLL
100th
Anniversary



Visual

Sports Action

THIRD PLACE

Joe Nogalski, Westlake High School, Austin, Texas

“The photographer worked hard to attain this non-typical point of view. Careful planning must have been essential. Behind the backboard rigs can be tricky to arrange with camera placement and proper stabilization, as well as trigger correctly with lighting setups. There appear to be some very slight reflections on the glass, that are inherent in shots like this, but they don’t take away too much from the power moment. Exposure proficiency (wide aperture, fast shutter speed, ISO choice) goes without saying. Professional quality.”

QUILL & SCROLL
100th
Anniversary

Visual

Sports Action

HONORABLE MENTION

Addie Clark, Shawnee Mission East High School, Prairie Village, Kansas

Adeline Whisner, Mount Vernon High School, Mount Vernon, Iowa

Audrey Peltier, St. Paul Academy and Summit School, St. Paul, Minnesota

Ezra Victor, Minnehaha Academy, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Grace Murphy, Wando High School, Mount Pleasant, South Carolina

Jake Strelitz, Westlake High School, Austin, Texas

Jocelynn Ayala, Ozona High School, Ozona, Texas

Mary-Hunter McCaslin, Wando High School, Mount Pleasant, South Carolina

Sarah Studer, Lindbergh High School, Saint Louis, Missouri



Visual

Sports Reaction

FIRST PLACE

**Sims Skaff, Davidson Day School, Davidson,
North Carolina**

“Sims Skaff combined good timing and good point of view to capture the enthusiasm of a tennis victory. The image is well composed and effectively utilized.”

QUILL & SCROLL
100th
Anniversary



Visual

Sports Reaction

SECOND PLACE

**Kaylin Mort, Francis Howell North High School,
St. Charles, Missouri**

“The photo combines a great reaction in a moment with perfect image alignment. The same moment would have been less is the angle was either direction. Sports reaction success comes anticipating and prepare to act. Bravo.”



Visual

Sports Reaction

THIRD PLACE

Caden Deardurff, St. Paul Academy and Summit School, St. Paul, Minnesota

“The faces make this image tell a story. Each of faces are in the light and engaged. Nice work.”

Visual

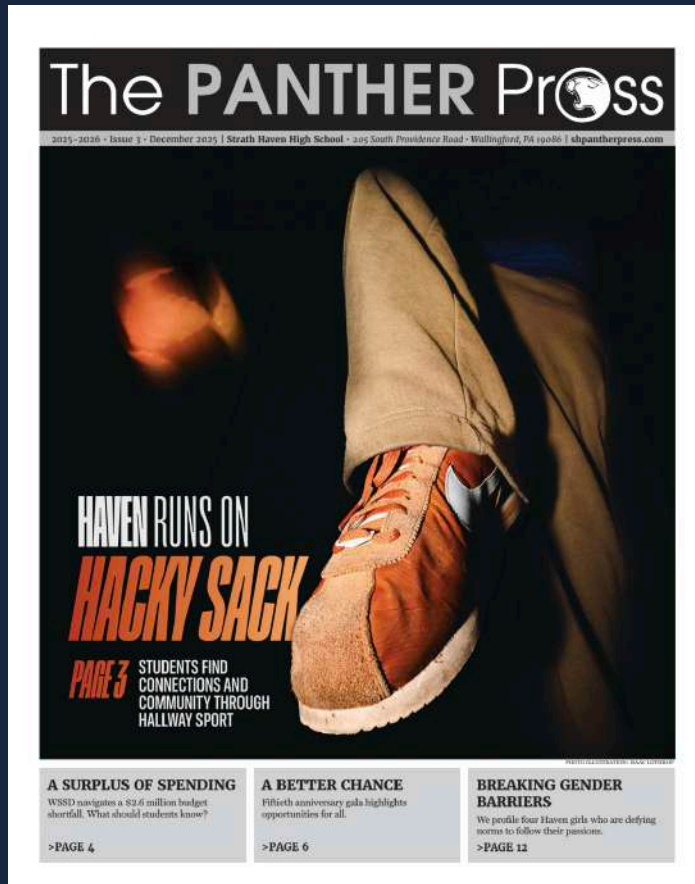
Sports Reaction

HONORABLE MENTION

Cana Schimelpfenig, Minnehaha Academy, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Madelyn Rohwer, Truman High School, Independence, Missouri

Vivian Akers, Rockwood Summit High School, Fenton, Missouri



Visual

Photo Illustration

FIRST PLACE

**Isaac Lothrop, Strath Haven High School,
Wallingford, Pennsylvania**

“Simple, yet powerful image magnifies the action as it leads the eye to the cover headline. Echoing the color from the shoe, to the hacky sack to the gradient-colored headline, this tightly cropped, enhanced image provides a unique perspective to the hallway sport.”



Visual

Photo Illustration

SECOND PLACE

Hadley Springer, Kaneland High School, Maple Park, Illinois

“Dropping the color and swirling the background, this photographer creates a centralized figure painting their own path in a complicated world. Tiny paint cups and splatters of pigment provide just the right touches as the artist creates their own unique image.”



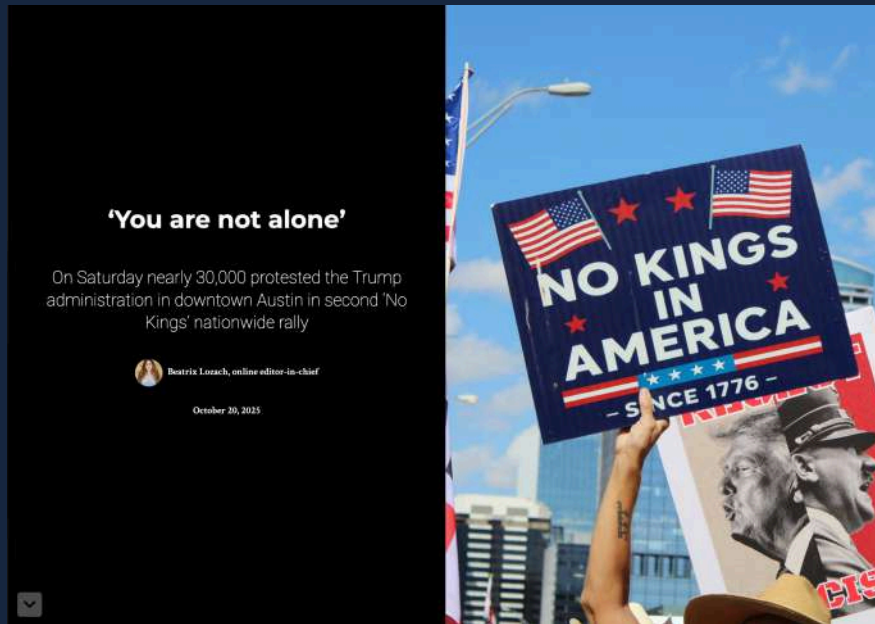
Visual

Photo Illustration

THIRD PLACE

Lele Hu, Shanghai American School, Shanghai, China

“Exaggerating the image in the viewfinder, this photographer forces the reader to think like the videographer. Simplifying the scene by shallowing the depth of field and blurring the background, the photographer creates a behind-the-scenes experience that few actually experience.”



Visual

Photo Slideshow

FIRST PLACE

Beatrix Lozach, McCallum High School, Austin, Texas

“Photos in this professionally designed gallery are intentional and varied. Beatrix positioned herself as a photographer to capture faces in the midst of the protest. The photo of the indigenous banner looks like the photographer is just barely keeping ahead of the movement. A lesser photographer would be off to the side or behind, but Beatrix positioned herself right in front of the action. She also focused on specific individuals and signs for visual variety and artistic impact.”



Manual students walk out in protest of gun violence



Sophia Tzanetos and Delaney Henon • September 5, 2025



Jack Masterson

Visual

Photo Slideshow

SECOND PLACE

**Jack Masterson, duPont Manual High School,
Louisville, Kentucky**

“Jack’s photos showcase a student protest with some behind scenes shots as well as excellent framing. He takes photos from various distances — long shot, medium shot and close-up — to help tell the whole story of the protest. The excellent framing on the photo of Maggie Stone, and the expression on her face helps convey the intensity of the event. The SDA speaking to reporters is also a well-composed shot that shows the event behind the scenes.”

Elburn Days festival

By: Sophia Schroll, Design Executive, Advertising Executive, and Social Media Executive • August 18, 2025



Visual

Photo Slideshow

THIRD PLACE

Sophia Schroll, Kaneland High School, Maple Park, Illinois

“Sophia’s collection showcases a variety of shots that are tightly composed with unique angles. The children on the carnival rides have strong composition and vibrant colors. The woman at the concession stand illustrates the guidelines of off-center subject and pattern. Combined with the signboard, the musicians and the mother/daughter photo, this collection tells the whole story of the festival.”

Visual

Photo Slideshow

HONORABLE MENTION

Joe Nogalski, Westlake High School, Austin, Texas

Leonardo Peña, Kingwood Park High School, Kingwood, Texas

Matthew Ramirez, Strath Haven High School, Wallingford, Pennsylvania



Visual

Profile or Environmental Portrait

FIRST PLACE

**Cameron Minatrea, Kingwood Park High School,
Kingwood, Texas**

“Sometimes simplicity wins the day. The black and white background is a subtle touch. Moving the subject out of the center truly helps with the compositions. Lighting is strong. Excellent choice of location.”



Visual

Profile or Environmental Portrait

SECOND PLACE

**Joseph Ji, Lakefield College School, Lakefield,
Ontario**

“The use of indoor lighting and action make this the most technically accomplished shot in the competition. Placing the subject in the rule of thirds position, however, would make for a strong composition.”



Visual

Profile or Environmental Portrait

THIRD PLACE

**Ximing Lin, Appleby College, Oakville, Ontario,
Canada**

“Really lovely lighting and tone control in this environmental portrait.”



Visual

Beginning Photographer

FIRST PLACE

Sophia Cicero, Shawnee Mission East High School, Prairie Village, Kansas

“The strength of Sophia’s photographs is her strong use of framing. The soccer photo tells the story of the loss in the dejected face and posture of the main subject as he sits by the runner-up trophy, framed by his fellow players. The auto tech class is brilliant framing of the students by the chrome. The basketball shot has both framing and leading lines, plus both faces are in focus, and the ball is included, creating a dynamic shot full of movement.”



Visual

Beginning Photographer

SECOND PLACE

Joy Felicano, Lindbergh High School, Saint Louis, Missouri

“Joy’s photos illustrate a strong sense of composition guidelines. The tennis photo illustrates the off-center subject guideline very well. The powderpuff photo is a strong reaction shot that fills the frame and has vibrant color. The drama photo creates a visually pleasing pattern with the repetition in the mirror, and the shallow depth-of-field narrows the focus on the subject. Well written captions include quotes from the participants.”



Visual

Beginning Photographer

THIRD PLACE

**Kinley Lord, Lindbergh High School, Saint Louis,
Missouri**

“Kinley’s photos showcase strong composition, especially the fill-the-frame guideline. Both academic photos show exceptional use of framing, and the chemistry lab also illustrates the off-center subject guideline. Even though the students are stationary, the photo creates a sense of movement. The photo on the field is tightly cropped with good lighting in a difficult lighting situation. ”



Visual

Editorial Cartoon

FIRST PLACE

Cheska Orias, McKinley High School, Honolulu, Hawaii

“Cheska’s cartoon is effective because it communicates a clear message, engages with a timely debate, highlights the human side of creativity and supports fellow artists. Their interactive element is outstanding and not gimmicky, but serves a clear purpose.”



Visual

Editorial Cartoon

SECOND PLACE

**Emery Mao, Ladue Horton Watkins High School,
St. Louis, Missouri**

“Emery’s cartoon is winning because it uses clear symbolism, exaggerated caricature and dramatic visual metaphors to communicate its political message. The composition and bold illustration style draw the viewer’s attention and make the commentary easy to understand.”



Visual

Editorial Cartoon

THIRD PLACE

Carter Hunt, Southwest Career and Technical Academy, Las Vegas, Nevada

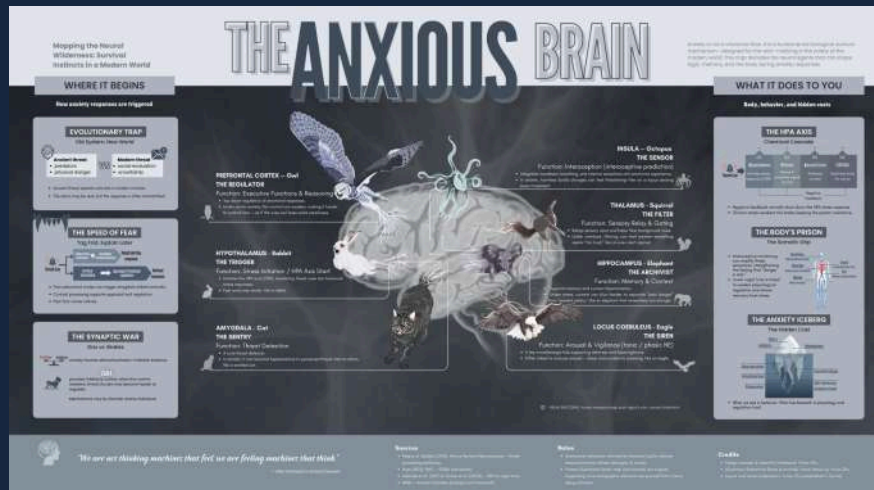
“Carter’s cartoon uses humor and exaggeration to highlight a relatable issue. Its clear message and engaging visuals make the point easy for readers to understand.”

Visual

Editorial Cartoon

HONORABLE MENTION

Niki Chen, Conestoga High School, Berwyn, Pennsylvania



Visual Informational Graphic

FIRST PLACE

**Weiqing (Vivian) Zhu, Basis International School
Guangzhou, Guanagdong, China**

“Wow! Clean graphics and choice of fonts. Central illustration draws interest in and leads to supporting information along the sides. Excellent use of color palette — fitting for the feeling anxiousness conveys. Very professional.”



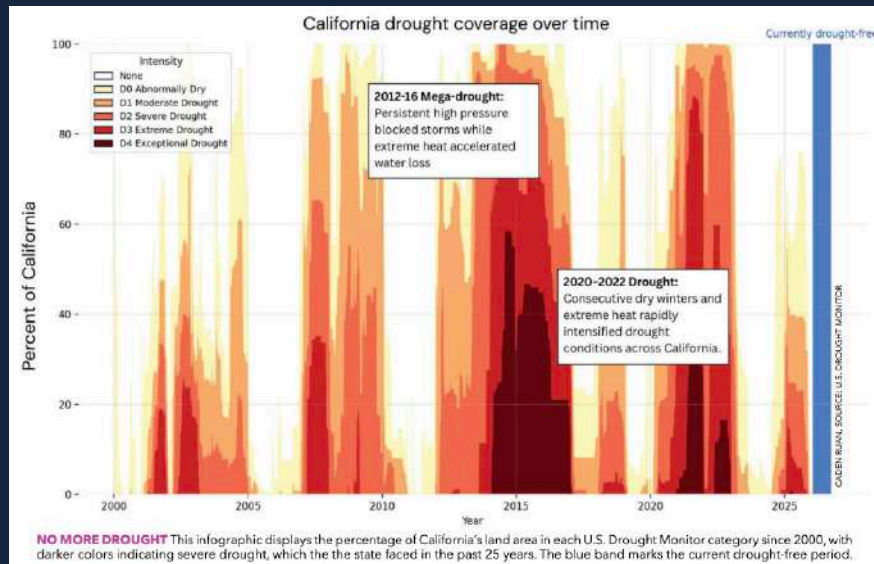
Visual

Informational Graphic

SECOND PLACE

Liyin Liu, Hangzhou No. 4 High School,
Hangzhou, Zhejiang

“Clean layout. Nice mix of vector graphics along with photographs. Large photo on the right anchors design nicely. Easy to follow the separate information ‘boxes.’ Info is separated, but yet cohesive.”



Visual

Informational Graphic

THIRD PLACE

**Caden Ruan, Claire Tian, The Harker School,
San Jose, California**

“Nice page spread. Simple illustrations and infographics, but good use of colors and style of graphics is cohesive throughout.”



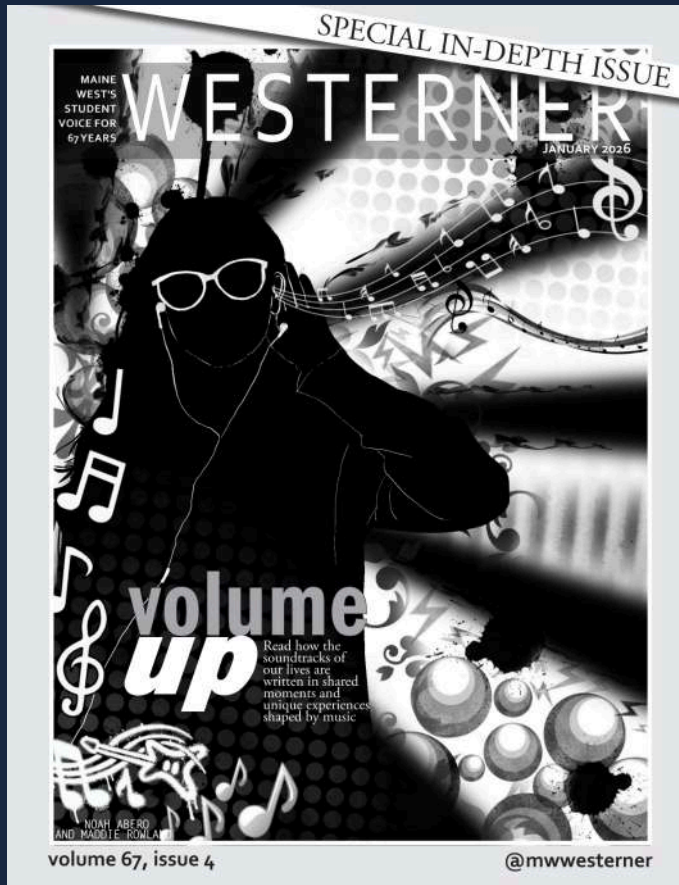
Visual

News Magazine Front Page Design

FIRST PLACE

**Sophia Basaldua, Westfield High School,
Westfield, New Jersey**

“This cover was anything but a ‘loser,’ combining wit and a unique illustration style. This magazine has a unique approach, jettisoning all the ‘defaults’ print publications have clung to for decades ... and that gives it a unique voice. The cover benefited from the coverage philosophy of a special issue, which is a welcome trend ... and then goes ‘all in.’”



Visual

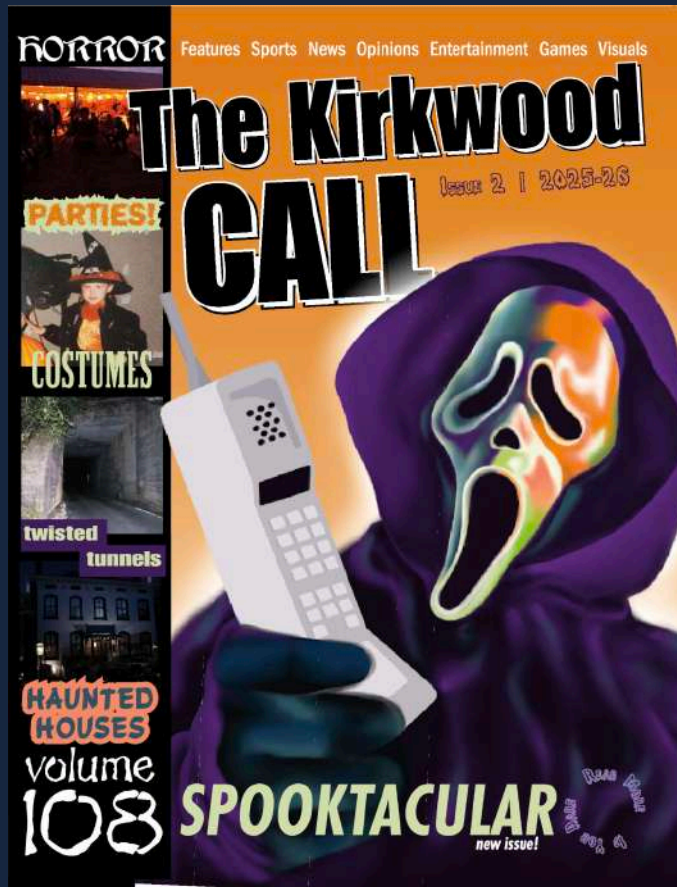
News Magazine Front Page Design

SECOND PLACE

Noah Abero, Maddie Rowland, Maine West High School, Des Plaines, Illinois

“Big and bold and black & white ... this cover features solid type choices and a sophisticated ‘teaser’ approach that takes readers to the cover coverage inside. This was a ‘special issue,’ not unlike theme-focused magazines. It certainly stood out, while maintaining many of what most readers expect in a newsmagazine cover.”

QUILL & SCROLL
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Anniversary



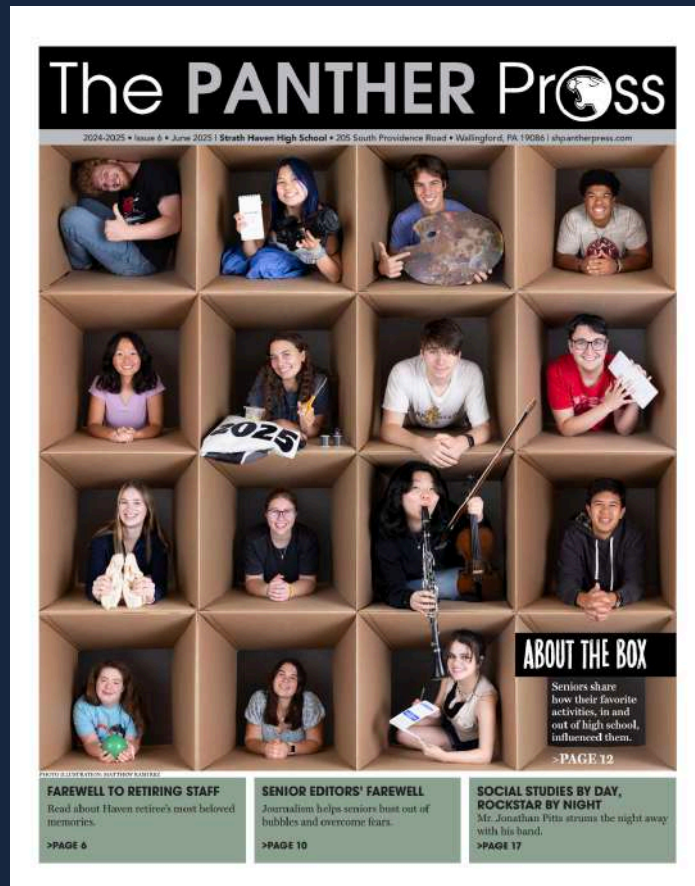
Visual

News Magazine Front Page Design

THIRD PLACE

Arianna Dunavant, Kiley Huang, Kirkwood High School, Kirkwood, Missouri

“A magazine that is open to sharing a fun, funky and clear voice deserves a cover like this one. From color to playful type to an explosion of ‘quick teases’ to inside coverage, this was a cover that makes readers smile. This cover has to be a ‘one off,’ due to its unique visual vocabulary, but readers would have no trouble following the point.”



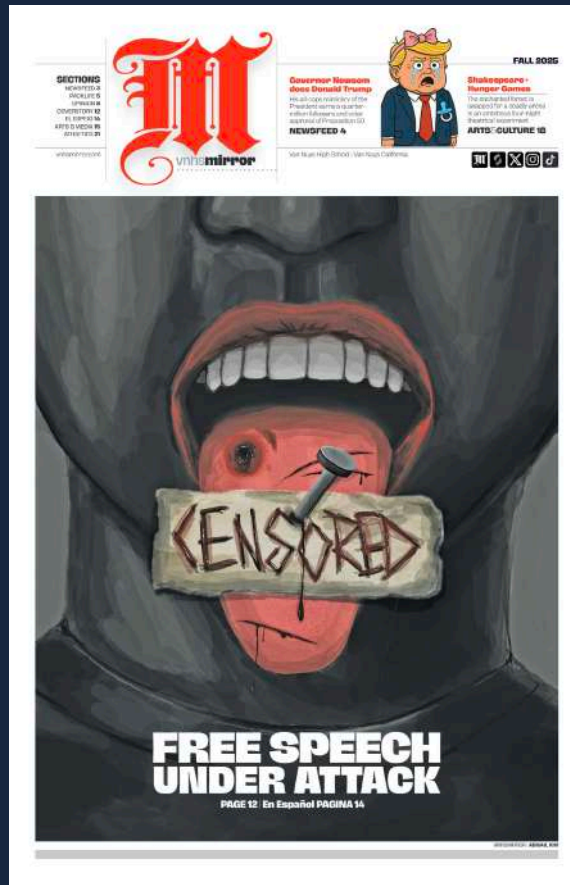
Visual

Newspaper Front Page Design

FIRST PLACE

Matthew Ramirez, Strath Haven High School, Wallingford, Pennsylvania

“Rose to the top due to the creativity and execution of a clever and demanding visual concept. My only hesitation was the ‘sandwich effect’ created by the flag across the top of the page and the teasers across the bottom. But the overall concept carried the day.”



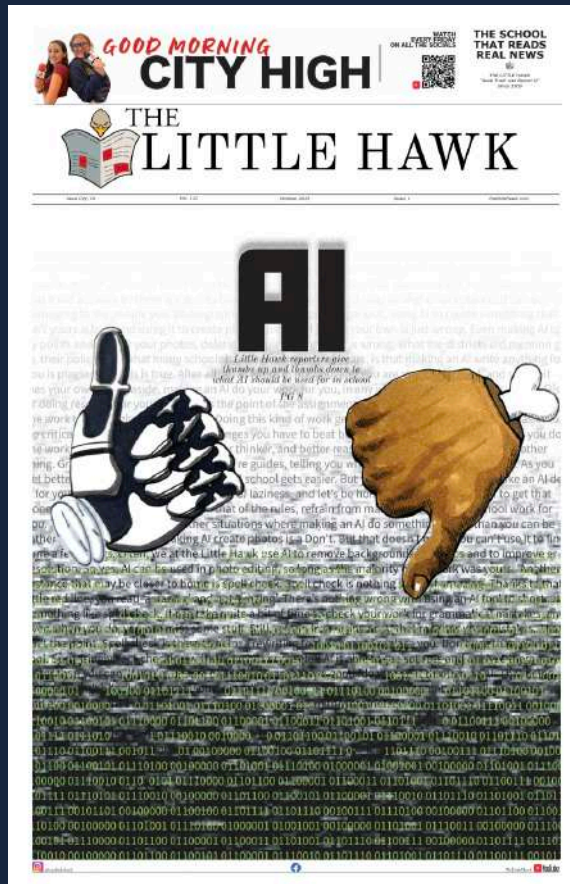
Visual

Newspaper Front Page Design

SECOND PLACE

Abigail Kim, Van Nuys High School, Van Nuys, California

“Sophisticated typography and art that was both provocative and even gruesome (but, then again, censorship is gruesome, I suppose). One of the most professional looking flags I have seen this year.”



Visual

Newspaper Front Page Design

THIRD PLACE

Kyle Hartwig, Iowa City High School, Iowa City, Iowa

“Clever art dominates the page. I also liked the voice/personality of the flag ... there is a LOT going on, but I appreciate seeing a publication take some chances in reaching our often reluctant readers.”



CORAL REEF COLLAPSE

Rising ocean temperatures push reefs to the brink

GLOBAL RESET
A RESEARCH PROJECT

Coral reefs support 25% of marine life but are currently facing their biggest bleaching event in history, making the first time that a coral reef has been completely destroyed. Rising ocean temperatures are pushing reefs to the brink of collapse.

With the average of last year's by a few degrees, coral reefs are bleaching when warming of the water is sustained for more than three months. This is the first time that a coral reef has been completely destroyed.

Corals aren't like plants that can bounce back. Once damaged, they take years to recover.

OSKAR BAUMGART '25

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When coral becomes bleached, it changes the look of the reef. As coral bleaches, the bright colors that are normally seen in coral reefs disappear. This is the first time that a coral reef has been completely destroyed.

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Engineering ocean flow maps with Tiffany Zhu

Engineering ocean flow maps with Tiffany Zhu. The research is about how ocean currents move water and how that affects the climate.

With climate change as such a large problem in our world, I wanted to focus on something that could make a difference.

We need action at multiple scales — globally, nationally and locally. This is our challenge to solve.

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Visual Features Page Design, Single Page

FIRST PLACE

Claire Tian, The Harker School, San Jose, California

"Gorgeous design with well-written content on an important topic. In the future, consider ragged-right justification for more natural-looking text."





Visual

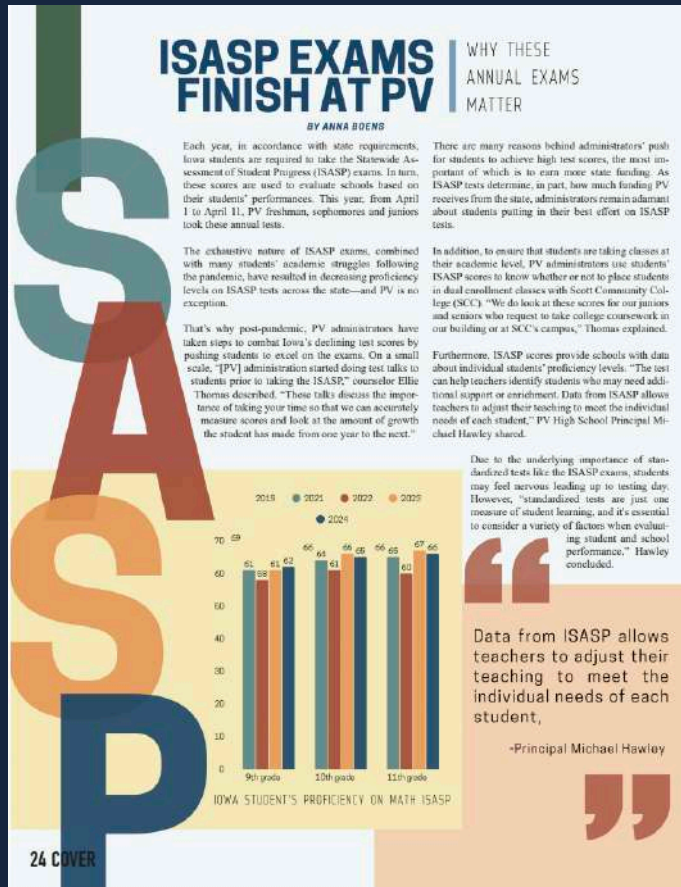
Features Page Design, Single Page

SECOND PLACE

**David Routt, duPont Manual High School,
Louisville, Kentucky**

“Bright colors used tastefully, good font choices and strong blurbs drew me into this well-written story. Well done!”

QS Note: link was broken after judging. We took what we could from online.



Visual

Features Page Design, Single Page

THIRD PLACE

Anna Boens, Ayah Alsheikha, Pleasant Valley High School, Bettendorf, Iowa

“Excellent color and font choices, graphic flow and text wrap for a meaningful story. Well done!”

Visual

Features Page Design, Single Page

HONORABLE MENTION

Anna Boens, Pleasant Valley High School, Bettendorf, Iowa



Visual

Features Page(s) Design, Two-Page Spread

FIRST PLACE

Laxumi Chandrakumar, Katelyn Chen, Safiya Ilmudeen, Keira Kress, Ella Lu, Nora Mariano, Ayaan Nadeem, Megan Xia, Carmel High School, Carmel, Indiana

“What a beautiful package. Every piece of the design makes the reader feel a beat. The designer did a fantastic job of creating a hierarchy with the large photos on the first page that draw the reader in and offer some variety, then maintaining that flow with very interesting capsules on the second page that fill the page, but also give the photos room to breathe. The slight variations in font and color make it readable while still providing a very fun, excellent design.”

QUILL & SCROLL
100th
Anniversary



Visual

Features Page(s) Design, Two-Page Spread

SECOND PLACE

Abigail Kim, Van Nuys High School, Van Nuys, California

“The designer has a great talent for letting graphics and the story shine in this spread. The whole package makes you feel something without even reading the story, and the simple black and red are powerful. The designer also did a fantastic job with the headline and deck treatment. Nice work!”



Visual

Features Page(s) Design, Two-Page Spread

THIRD PLACE

Ashley Mo, Jonathan Szeto, The Harker School, San Jose, California

“The use of different media and the way the center subjects pop off the page is just so cool. There are a lot of photos, but it’s not overwhelming, and the illustration at the bottom is subtle and ties everything together. Very fun design!”

Visual

Features Page(s) Design, Two-Page Spread

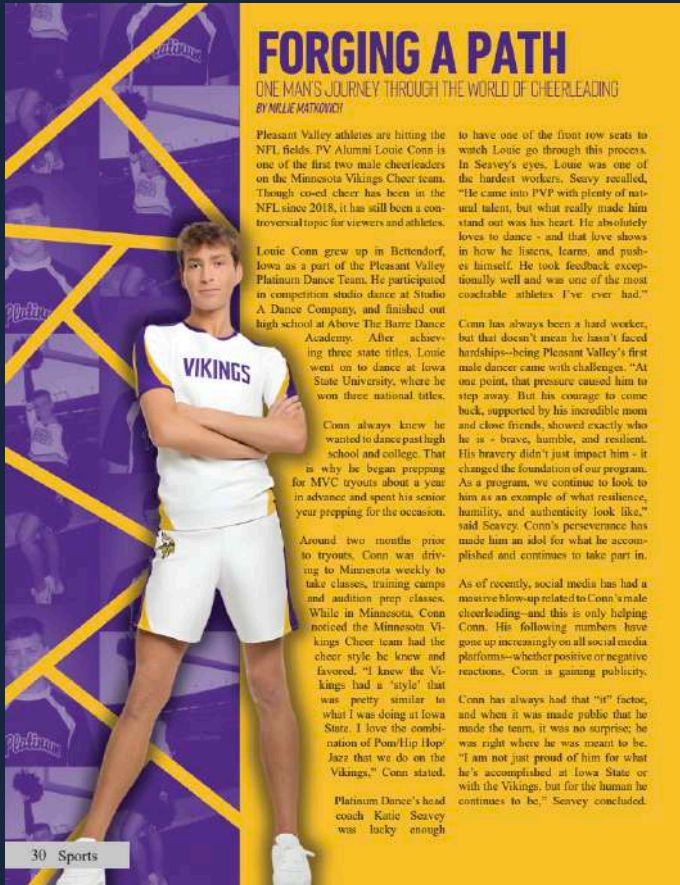
HONORABLE MENTION

Charlottie Yip, Archbishop Riordan High School, San Francisco, California

Hali Ponce, Eisenhower High School, Shelby Township, Michigan

Jane Sheffel, Ladue Horton Watkins High School, St. Louis, Missouri

Liza Larson , Clarke Central High School, Athens, Georgia



FORGING A PATH

ONE MAN'S JOURNEY THROUGH THE WORLD OF CHEERLEADING

BY NICOLE MATKOVIC

Pleasant Valley athletes are hitting the NFL fields: PV Alumni Louie Conn is one of the first two male cheerleaders on the Minnesota Vikings Cheer team. Though co-ed cheer has been in the NFL since 2018, it has still been a controversial topic for viewers and athletes.

Louie Conn grew up in Bettendorf, Iowa as a part of the Pleasant Valley Platinum Dance Team. He participated in competition studio dance at Studio A Dance Company, and finished out high school at Above The Barre Dance Academy. After achieving three state titles, Louie went on to dance at Iowa State University, where he won three national titles.

Conn always knew he wanted to dance past high school and college. That is why he began prepping for MVC tryouts about a year in advance and spent his senior year prepping for the occasion.

Around two months prior to tryouts, Conn was driving to Minnesota weekly to take classes, training camps and audition prep classes. While in Minnesota, Conn noticed the Minnesota Vikings Cheer team had the cheer style he knew and favored. "I knew the Vikings had a 'style' that was pretty similar to what I was doing at Iowa State. I love the combination of Pom/Tip Hop/Jazz that we do on the Vikings," Conn stated.

Platinum Dance's head coach Katie Seavey was lucky enough

to have one of the front row seats to watch Louie go through this process. In Seavey's eyes, Louie was one of the hardest workers. Seavey recalled, "He came into PVP with plenty of natural talent, but what really made him stand out was his heart. He absolutely loves to dance - and that love shows in how he listens, learns, and pushes himself. He took feedback exceptionally well and was one of the most coachable athletes I've ever had."

Conn has always been a hard worker, but that doesn't mean he hasn't faced hardships—being Pleasant Valley's first male dancer came with challenges. "At one point, that pressure caused him to step away. But his courage to come back, supported by his incredible mom and close friends, showed exactly who he is - brave, humble, and resilient. His bravery didn't just impact him - it changed the foundation of our program. As a program, we continue to look to him as an example of what resilience, humility, and authenticity look like," said Seavey. Conn's perseverance has made him an idol for what he accomplished and continues to take part in.

As of recently, social media has had a massive blow-up related to Conn's male cheerleading—and this is only helping Conn. His following numbers have gone up increasingly on all social media platforms—whether positive or negative reactions. Conn is gaining publicity.

Conn has always had that "it" factor, and when it was made public that he made the team, it was no surprise; he was right where he was meant to be. "I am not just proud of him for what he's accomplished at Iowa State or with the Vikings, but for the human he continues to be," Seavey concluded.

Visual

Sports Page(s) Design

FIRST PLACE

Anna Boens, Pleasant Valley High School, Bettendorf, Iowa

"This is the perfect example of less is more. Bold colors and shapes make this design strong. The phantom images in the background add depth and texture."

MORE THAN A DANCE

Larson Spence Effect inspires positivity, inclusivity and integration of disabilities through dancing and cheerleading

S "I'm not being a dancer because I'm disabled," Reynolds said. "I'm not being a dancer because I'm disabled." Reynolds said. "I'm not being a dancer because I'm disabled." Reynolds said.

SPARKLE DANCERS GATHER in the gymnasium. Reynolds said. "I'm not being a dancer because I'm disabled." Reynolds said. "I'm not being a dancer because I'm disabled." Reynolds said.

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BY CAROLINE CORRISSON
PHOTOGRAPHY BY VINCENT HADZ
BY MEG MYCKATYN
MUSIC BY KEVIN COSTELLO



LEFT: Lauren Spence (left) and Larue Spence (right) perform during the school's 2014 homecoming. **BELOW:** Lauren Spence (left) and Larue Spence (right) perform during the school's 2014 homecoming.



LEFT: Lauren Spence (left) and Larue Spence (right) perform during the school's 2014 homecoming. **BELOW:** Lauren Spence (left) and Larue Spence (right) perform during the school's 2014 homecoming.

REIGNING CHAMPS

Boys soccer looks for a repeat state title

BY MIKE HANSEN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY VINCENT HADZ

AFTER THE VARIETY DOESN'T seem to be the case for the boys soccer team, it's looking for a repeat state title. The team is looking for a repeat state title.

The boys soccer team is looking for a repeat state title. The team is looking for a repeat state title. The team is looking for a repeat state title.



ABOVE: Vincent Hadz (left) and Larue Spence (right) perform during the school's 2014 homecoming. **BELOW:** Vincent Hadz (left) and Larue Spence (right) perform during the school's 2014 homecoming.

Visual Sports Page(s) Design

SECOND PLACE

Margaret Myckatyn, Ladue Horton Watkins High School, St. Louis, Missouri

"This spread has it all! Text wrap, nice use of color, strong photos and pull quote. Lots of interest organized in a clean layout."

UNITED IN STRIDE

Siblings combine together for historic track season

Who better to lead the team than the two best athletes in the state? The answer is yes.

For the last two seasons, the team has been led by two of the state's best athletes. This year, the team has added a third member to the mix.

The team has a strong tradition of success. In 2022, they won the state championship. In 2023, they were runners-up.

They are now looking to defend their title. The team has a lot of talent and is ready to compete.

They are excited to start the season. They are looking forward to a successful year.

They are confident they can win. They are ready to give it their all.

They are proud to represent their school. They are looking forward to a great season.

They are excited to see what the future holds. They are ready to take on any challenge.

They are confident they can achieve their goals. They are ready to work hard.

They are excited to be part of a team that is so successful. They are looking forward to a great year.

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Running into purpose



Sarah Denton

With a career in front of her, Sarah Denton decided to run. It was a decision that would change her life.

She had always been an athlete, but it wasn't until she started running that she found her true passion.

Running became a way for her to express herself and to find a sense of purpose.

She found that running helped her to overcome her fears and to become a stronger person.

She is now a professional runner and is looking forward to a successful career.

She is proud to represent her country and is looking forward to a great season.

She is excited to see what the future holds. She is ready to take on any challenge.

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Visual Sports Page(s) Design

THIRD PLACE

Ella Hagerty, Wando High School, Mount Pleasant, South Carolina

“Again, less is more. A strong photo paired with bold colors make this design pop off the page.”

QUILL & SCROLL
100th Anniversary

Visual

Sports Page(s) Design

HONORABLE MENTION

Lily Patrimanis, Ella Sherrick, Ayah Alsheikha, Pleasant Valley High School, Bettendorf, Iowa

TAI PO FIRE: DISASTERS AFFECT NOT ONLY HUMANS

WHY PET EVACUATION PLANNING IS ESSENTIAL

By **Tim Pui Hui-yau**
Guest Columnist

The disaster of the building fire last week, I am writing these words with a heavy heart. The disaster, the tragedy, is not just for the humans who live in the building, but also for the animals who live in the building. The disaster is not just for the humans who live in the building, but also for the animals who live in the building. The disaster is not just for the humans who live in the building, but also for the animals who live in the building.

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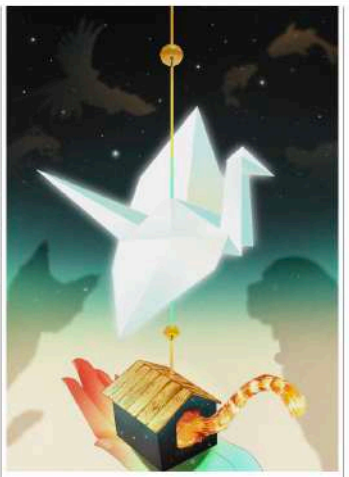
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opinion that pet evacuation planning is essential. The disaster of the building fire last week, I am writing these words with a heavy heart. The disaster, the tragedy, is not just for the humans who live in the building, but also for the animals who live in the building.

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Effective pet evacuation planning does more than save animal lives. It can also save human lives by shortening evacuation time, which is crucial for survival," writes Tim Pui Hui-yau.

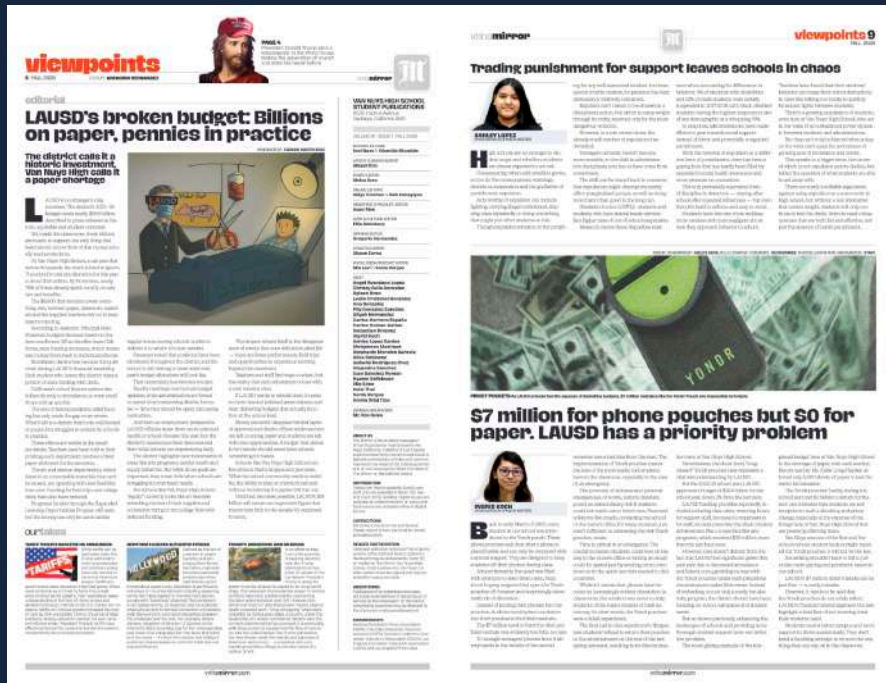
Visual Editorial Page(s) Design

FIRST PLACE

Ya Shu Chang Han, China contest, Hong Kong SAR, Hong Kong SAR

“Clean design invites the reader to stop at this non-traditional opinion page. Strong dominant illustration grabs reader attention to this guest columnist spread. Use of column guides, rule lines and typography give a contemporary look, while the headline package and opinion nutgraf sum up the essential information, making a pleasing visual package.”



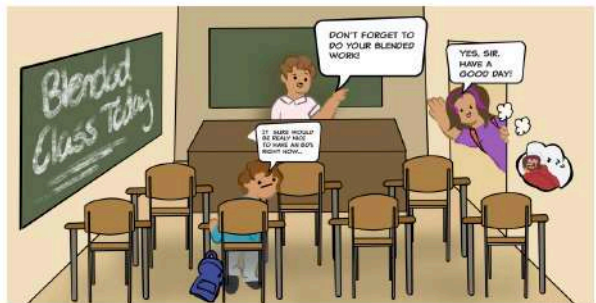


Visual Editorial Page(s) Design

SECOND PLACE

Abigail Kim, Van Nuys High School, Van Nuys, California

“Well-designed opinion pages stress readability in traditionally text-heavy pages with bold font headlines, drop cap copy starters and simple, thin rule lines separating packages. Clear labels help identify the prominently placed editorial and outtakes unit. White space gives the pages room to breath and invite reader interest.”



BLENDED CLASSES PROVIDE FREEDOM, SPARK CONCERNS

The benefits and drawbacks of blended learning classes at North High School have caused administrative concern, but the Board believes that these classes can only benefit the students of Saint Charles.

On behalf of the Board of Education

Blended learning classes at North High School are a mix of traditional classroom instruction and online learning. This allows students to learn at their own pace and in a more personalized way. However, there are concerns about the quality of instruction and the impact on students who may not have access to technology at home.

This can encourage **independence** and **responsibility** in students. That can prepare students for not only college but also for their future careers.

What We Should Not Do: We should not allow blended learning to replace traditional classroom instruction. We should ensure that all students have access to technology and that the quality of instruction is maintained.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT BLENDED CLASSES AT NORTH HIGH SCHOOL?

Students' thoughts on blended learning classes at North High School.



Student's Thoughts: Blended learning classes are a mix of traditional classroom instruction and online learning. This allows students to learn at their own pace and in a more personalized way.



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NORTH STAR

Editorial Board

Editor: [Name]

Editorial Board: [List of names]

Editorial Board: [List of names]

Editorial Board: [List of names]

Editorial Board: [List of names]

Editorial Board: [List of names]

Editorial Board: [List of names]

Editorial Board: [List of names]

Visual Editorial Page(s) Design

THIRD PLACE

Carly Dyson, Carly Hedrich, Francis Howell North High School, Saint Charles, Missouri

“A dominant horizontal cartoon grabs reader attention to concerns about Blended Classes at their school. Smart use of subheads and a pull-out nutgraf break the columns of text to add to readability. White space isolates the vertical student opinion package, while a light gray screen separates from the vertical staff box from the rest of content, making for a clean, easy-to-navigate opinion spread.”



Among Blue Valley's many students who love fall activities, senior **Sarah Baker** enjoys baking and cooking during the season. Spending time outside during the fall is also important to her.

"I look forward to walking outside after school and seeing the seasons changing, especially the morning air," she said.

Autumn is her absolute favorite season, and she was born in October. Baker likes visiting cider mills with her friends and eating pumpkin bread as her comfort food.

"You can have it as breakfast or dessert," she said. "I love pumpkin flavor in general."

Coincidentally, senior **Taylor Freeman** was also born in October, and she talked about how she enjoys fall activities, such as visiting the pumpkin patch and watching scary movies with her friends.

By mid-October, Freeman likes to get her Halloween nails done, and as the time goes by and the leaves touch the ground, Freeman is already in her favorite cafe ordering her treasured fall beverages.

"I would get an iced chai latte or bobo that is brown sugar [or a] pumpkin spice latte," she said.

Junior **Hope Ames** enjoys going to the apple cider mill with her family.

A fun tradition Ames has is that she and her family often shop for candy. Like Baker, Ames also loves pumpkin bread during fall.

She prefers a vanilla and warm scent that reminds her of the fall weather to come.

"I get fall nails as soon as September hits," she said.

"September marks the start of fall, and no one can tell me otherwise."

Parker **Knoche** is a junior and loves playing football and hanging out with his friends every Friday night.

Although he does not have a favorite fall drink, he likes Dr. Pepper. With the thoughts of fall coming, Knoche likes seeing the changing tree colors and the sunset in the background of football games.

His ideal meal during harvest time is anything Thanksgiving-related like turkey, ham or sweet potatoes. On fall Fridays, Knoche spends time with friends.

"We watch college football," he said. "We just hang out [at] barbecues [and] cookouts."

6 WORDS & DESIGN BY JAIDYNE MEANS SEPTEMBER 2025 | FEATURE

Visual

Beginning Designer/Artist

FIRST PLACE

Jaidyne Means, Blue Valley High School, Overland Park, Kansas

"The Fall Activities page is so eye-catching, and it's the icing on the cake that Jaidyne also wrote the content. I like that Jaidyne takes some risks with headline treatments. It helps tell the story. Jaidyne is a talented artist and with page design, artistic elements help support, but don't overpower, packages. Great work!"

Salary over students

It's not just advanced minds CollegeBoard requires, it's also advanced income

Zanna Allen
staff reporter

CollegeBoard was founded in 1900 by a group of admission test administrators to provide a more universal standard to college admission processes, which, at the time, varied greatly by school. As the organization grew, it developed the SAT, which originally was based on intelligence tests used in military service. These tests were fundamentally designed to exclude minorities and marginalized groups from high-standing jobs in the military. Although CollegeBoard has done its best to scrub its tests of this stain, it is still built into the foundation of the organization and its aims.

The cost of AP exams creates disparities in students' ability to take those higher-level courses, usually falling along racial lines, although CollegeBoard does offer a fee reduction of \$47 if eligible. This assistance is usually not enough to make the courses truly accessible to everyone. The steep costs of these academic services perpetuate inequities between students, leading to unfair conditions for many underprivileged students, all while enriching CollegeBoard.

As high school students approach college applications, it becomes a constant race of stacking AP classes, SAT and ACT prep, and extra-curriculars. Although some might say you don't necessarily need these things to get into college, at this point, prep courses and extra-curriculars are so competitive that students are expected to pursue all these activities. How did it get this way, you may ask? The reason is that alleged non-profit organizations like CollegeBoard profit from students' stress and create a pay-to-win environment. Meanwhile, CollegeBoard forces less fortunate students in the dust, stripping away many of their opportunities for a better future.

Public education is meant to equip students with the resources they need to succeed in their future education, but the monopolistic CollegeBoard has over-standardized testing, making it nearly impossible for students to get into their dream college without spending hundreds of dollars.

The cost for one AP exam in America and Canada is \$99, and this cost can stack up as students sign up for more courses. The cost of SAT and ACT tests, which are \$68 each with

additional fees for things like add-ons and early reports, stacks on as well. CollegeBoard pricing has been rising by a dollar per year for the past five years, and it begs the question of whether CollegeBoard is truly the organization it claims to be.

CollegeBoard is officially a "not-for-profit" organization as designated by the IRS, which, although similar to a nonprofit, has some key differences. To qualify to be a non-profit you must be an organization bettering the public good, and put any profit you make back into the mission. Non-profit organizations are similar, but because they are typically member-focused, they do not have as many requirements to display their earnings publicly, which lets them be more flexible and discreet to their patrons. Another difference is the amount of tax exemptions the organization is eligible for, meaning that non-profit organizations still have some tax obligations.

Although a "not-for-profit" is not supposed to collect excess revenue, a study by Total Registration found that CollegeBoard has been generating profit for the past 15 years. In 2023,

CollegeBoard held over \$1.77 billion, keeping between \$4-14 of every \$100 it takes in. What does it do with all this money? Investments are a big part of what they use their money for, but it is important to mention that the top executives of CollegeBoard are paid over \$200,000 a year, double the salary of a typical "not-for-profit" executive, and almost as much as the President of the United States.

When looking through this lens, CollegeBoard's mission and priorities are cracked wide open. According to their website, CollegeBoard claims that they are "driven by a shared mission to expand access and remove barriers for all learners."

But if that is true, why is it that their prices for these tests for access are only increasing? They could use their

cash to make the tests more affordable to everyone. Their greed causes real harm to students who face financial stress and stress rather than an opportunity for higher education, and further's disparities between them and their classmates.

For weaker students, resources are available for them to invest in, such as AP tutors and study guides, which can make preparing for the rigorous exams smoother. CollegeBoard also offers an unlimited number of attempts for the SAT and 12 attempts for the ACT. However, the steeper part is that each test costs just as much as the original. This makes it much more difficult for financially impacted students to take it more than a couple of times, while more financially privileged students can take it as many times as they please. Essentially, they're being

cheated, overworked, and their pockets \$100 lighter. The smaller, CollegeBoard, strikes once again. AP courses are also distributed unequally, making it difficult for students in lower-income districts to get the opportunities that wealthier districts get. In a study done by the United States Government Accountability Office, they found that 58.2% of high schools in lower-income districts offer AP courses, while in wealthier districts, 71.2% of their high schools offer them. This means that many gifted students are unable to reach their full potential and demonstrate their abilities because of their financial standing, which leads them to miss out on more opportunities than their wealthier counterparts enjoy.

CollegeBoard presents itself as an altruistic corporation, aiming to provide advanced education for students wanting challenging courses and a head start on college. However, the more you inspect them, the more you understand that their current pricing is indicative that they are only posing as such. In actuality, they are just as dirty and power hungry as any other money-grabbing business. The prices CollegeBoard demands come at an incredible cost to students, students who are stressed with financial burdens and overworked with stress to succeed, all for a chance at what they promise is a better future, just one SAT score away.

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“Non-profit organizations like CollegeBoard profit from student stress and create a pay-to-win environment.”

“The additional pressure this adds to disadvantaged students to perform well on their first few SAT and ACT tests can set them up for failure.”



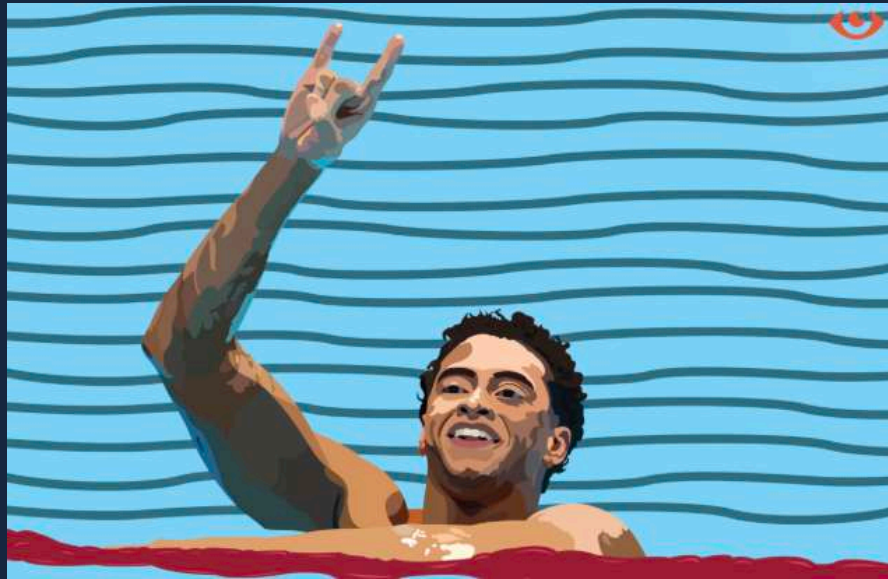
“Squirrel” is a squirrel using the CollegeBoard logo by hand.

Visual Beginning Designer/Artist

SECOND PLACE

Zanna Allen, McCallum High School, Austin, Texas

“Great portfolio showing a variety of skills. Though the category is designer/artist, I really appreciate that Zanna also writes. The designer takes the whole package from idea to concept and does a great job of pulling all the elements together. I also think that Zanna does a great job of following the Shield’s style, while not being afraid to experiment with some design techniques. I’m excited to see Zanna grow as a designer!”



Visual

Beginning Designer/Artist

THIRD PLACE

**Evelyn Zhao, DuPont Manual High School,
Louisville, Kentucky**

“Evelyn’s graphics help tell the story. She has a great style. I especially liked the illustration of Shaine Casas. Evelyn took a pretty static photo and made it very appealing.”

Visual

Beginning Designer/Artist

HONORABLE MENTION

Carly Hedrich, Francis Howell North High School, Saint Charles, Missouri

Yong Ding, Deerfield Academy, Deerfield, Massachusetts

QUILL & SCROLL
100th
Anniversary

Multimedia

WVM 2026



Multimedia

Video News Package

FIRST PLACE

**Vanessa Ng, Sophia Johnson, Francis Howell
North High School, Saint Charles, Missouri**

“The video quality is fantastic from start to finish. In most cases, the writing flows nicely and quotes add value to the piece. Excellent work getting administrative, faculty and student perspectives. Thank you also for citing the specific piece of legislation for your audience. Well done!”



Multimedia

Video News Package

SECOND PLACE

**Alexis Barker, Wichita Southeast High School,
Wichita, Kansas**

“Barker’s piece begins with a fantastic nat pop and a focused video of a patient evaluation. The quotes magnify the story and the journalist does well to have the experts teach the audience. Outstanding citations of FILE video and CDC content. Well done!”



Multimedia

Video News Package

THIRD PLACE

**Kaitlyn Evans, St. Joseph Catholic School,
Madison, Mississippi**

“This piece has a rich diversity of thought ranging from school leadership, state lawmakers and parents for and against the issue. Additionally, the writing flows nicely and does not impede the viewer from understanding the multiple viewpoints. Well done!”

Multimedia

Video News Package

HONORABLE MENTION

Mason Zhang, Alia Hassan, Bellaire High School, Bellaire, Texas

Max Kihneman, Fred T. Foard High School, Newton, North Carolina



Multimedia

Video Sports Package

FIRST PLACE

**Vihaan Madhavan, Marquette High School,
Chesterfield, Missouri**

“Lots to applaud here. I love the camera angles following the biker throughout the course, plus the comments from the parent help tell the story better than an anchor or reporter could. I really enjoyed listening to the biker’s process of improving over time and using a coach to help him progress. Outstanding work newsgathering something that’s not considered a ‘popular’ sport. Refreshing to learn something new in a category filled with football recaps. Congratulations!”



Multimedia

Video Sports Package

SECOND PLACE

**Kane Manfull, Francis Howell North High School,
Saint Charles, Missouri**

“Many things to applaud with this piece. First, the graphics are interactive and assist with the storytelling. Second, B-roll of the preparations in the weight room add credence to the story angle of hard work despite the losing streak. Finally, the piece includes a variety of clips — including sportscasting — to tell the story. Nice work!”



Multimedia

Video Sports Package

THIRD PLACE

**Hannah McDonagh, Alex Politzer, Lake
Braddock High School, Burke, Virginia**

“Very intriguing piece from start to finish. Nice work newsgathering on something outside the common idea of a ‘sport.’ Great alternative storytelling idea to go out with the team on the body of water despite some instances of shaky video. Great work getting the student perspective in addition to just an adult. Keep up the good work.”

Multimedia

Video Sports Package

HONORABLE MENTION

Alexis Barker, Wichita Southeast High School, Wichita, Kansas



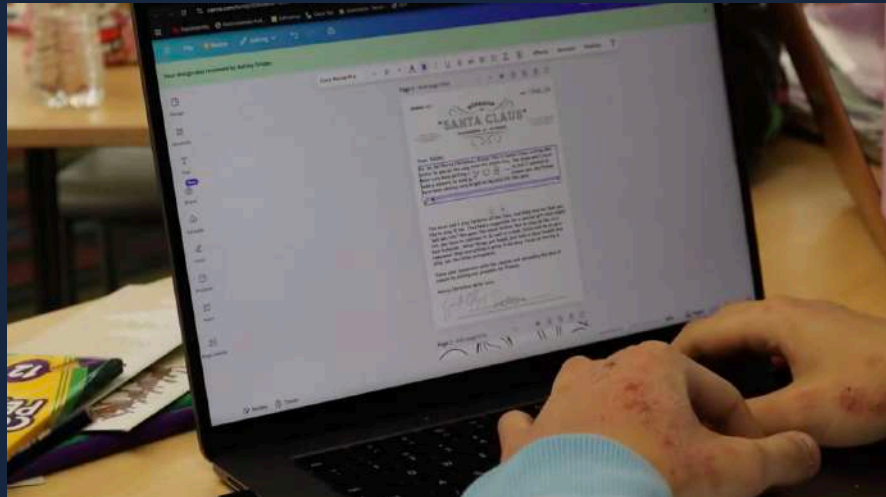
Multimedia

Video Features Package

FIRST PLACE

Max Kihneman, Fred T. Foard, Newton, North Carolina

“Great job weaving B-roll and A-roll together to make a cohesive story. The heart of the business is really evident in this piece! Great reporting and nice job with the editing.”



Multimedia

Video Features Package

SECOND PLACE

**Grace Carroll, Davie County High School,
Lewisville, North Carolina**

“The B-roll used in this piece transports the viewer to the classroom really effectively. Nice job getting solid interviews and picking the most impactful quotes.”



Multimedia

Video Features Package

THIRD PLACE

**Jason Buckley, St. Joseph Catholic School,
Madison, Mississippi**

“The use of archival footage in this piece is really creative and fits the story quite well. Nice job selecting interview subjects who have something to add to the story.”



Multimedia

Video DEI, Social Justice Reporting

FIRST PLACE

**Max Kihneman, Fred T. Foard High School,
Newton, North Carolina**

“This is an excellent human-interest story that focuses on one central story arc to connect with viewers. The camera work and technical execution add to this effect. The story features several important voices and perspectives to help the narrative come alive.”



Multimedia

Video Features Package

FIRST PLACE

Max Kihneman, Fred T. Foard, Newton, NC

“Great job weaving B-roll and A-roll together to make a cohesive story. The heart of the business is really evident in this piece! Great reporting and nice job with the editing.”



Multimedia

Video DEI, Social Justice Reporting

SECOND PLACE

Vanessa Ng, Kate Vernon, Francis Howell North High School, Saint Charles, Missouri

“This piece is an excellent story about a school club that seeks to foster better connection within the community. The interviews and visuals add context, which is necessary for a well-rounded picture of the club itself and its greater purpose.”



Multimedia

Video DEI, Social Justice Reporting

THIRD PLACE

Tyler Jackson, Davi De Oliveira, Thomas Worthington High School, Worthington, Ohio

“This piece covers an important timely issue both in visuals and in the substance of the interviews. It localizes a national story in a way that’s directly relevant to the audience.”



Multimedia

Documentary Video

FIRST PLACE

Grace Zhao, The Cambridge School of Weston, Wewston, Massachusetts

“Outstanding visual quality. The use of tasteful motion graphics pulls in the viewer. The videography was done with a variety of angles, panning shots, which keep the pace moving and well-placed settings with clean, interesting backgrounds and soft lighting (in some difficult artificially lit situations). The voiceovers guide us through the topic with grace and reverence. Background music is at a subtle level that adds to the experience. All of this combines for an excellently pleasing experience. Congratulations!”



Multimedia

Documentary Video

SECOND PLACE

Shulang Cao, Beijing, China

“Though the topic might seem simple, the videographer gives us a fascinating commentary on just how historic and complicated an abacus can be, with an emotional human touch. The visuals are professional level, giving the viewer beautifully lit settings with panning shots that keep the story moving. The interview portions are well edited. What is most gratifying is the personal touch we get from the storyteller, from traveling in an airplane to teaching school children. A few English translations in the subtitles were not fully accurate, something to watch for, but this was a solid documentary on the whole.”

QUILL & SCROLL
100th
Anniversary



Multimedia

Documentary Video

THIRD PLACE

**Max Kihneman, Fred T. Foard High School,
Newton, North Carolina**

“The topic of the video is uplifting and engaging. Well chosen! The quality of the visual angles and lighting rivals most local and national news programs. Friendly voiceovers set the scene without being obtrusive. We can almost smell the buttery popcorn and feel the heat of the poppers. Well edited quotes give insight into the personalities of the family. One slight suggestion for improvement is to listen for audio plosives. Some could be heard in the on-location shoots. Positioning of the mic, more robust pop filters or software processing can mitigate this. All-in-all, well done!”

QUILL & SCROLL
100th
Anniversary

Multimedia

Documentary Video

HONORABLE MENTION

Max Chung, Charlie Brady, Parkway West High School, Ballwin, Missouri

Ximing Lin, Appleby College, Oakville, Ontario, Canada



Multimedia

Audio Podcast: Single Episode

FIRST PLACE

**Maggie Stone, duPont Manual High School,
Louisville, Kentucky**

“Great work getting multiple sources to discuss the ins and outs of teaching, and why people decided to move on. Effective summation of your magazine article. The quotes used advance the story instead of repeating your voiceover. Keep up the great work.”



Multimedia

Audio Podcast: Single Episode

SECOND PLACE

**Heather Wright, Fred T. Foard High School,
Newton, North Carolina**

“Thank you for transporting us to your community for a slice of local culture. Great work getting both the law enforcement and student perspective on this topic. I enjoyed hearing the vehicles in the background and could picture myself driving down the highway. Great work!”

Podcast Episode

Screen Time's Over

 Screen Time's Over

Multimedia

Audio Podcast: Single Episode

THIRD PLACE

Zikra Haque, Emma Lai, Youan Lee, Katherine Rabe, Iowa City West High School, Iowa City, Iowa

“I appreciate the diversity of voices you gathered for the podcast and the space you gave them to express their joys and concerns about the new district policy. Keep up the good work!”

Multimedia

[Audio Podcast: Single Episode](#)

HONORABLE MENTION

Maddie Lynn, duPont Manual High School, Louisville, Kentucky

Peter Atchley, Clarke Central High School, Athens, Georgia

50 YEARS OF Agatha Christie

With the 50th anniversary of Agatha Christie's death, learn more about her work and impact.

RECURRING CHARACTERS

Check out some of Christie's most well known characters

ELUSIVE EVIDENCE

Follow the evidence that led to the uncovering of a murder in the *Murder on the Orient Express*. Click the evidence to hear an audio playthrough!

SPEAK-UPS! What is your favorite Agatha Christie work?

POPULAR PICKS Check out some of Christie's popular works

THE QUEEN OF CRIME Learn about Agatha Christie's impact

BEYOND THE BOOK Check out some recent movie adaptations

BY THE NUMBERS

66 detective novels written

25+ Christie titles in the CHS media center

100 total translations of Christie's work

DEATH ON THE NILE

ABC MURDERS

5 LITTLE PIGS

A Haunting in Venice (2023)

Death on the Nile (2022)

Murder on the Orient Express (2022)

Tommy & Tuppence

Hercule Poirot

Miss Marple

And Then There Were None

MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS

A HAUNTING IN VENICE

DEATH ON THE NILE

MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS

PERFECTED the fair-play whodunit, making every clue visible to the reader.

USED closed, controlled, settings to intensify suspicion and tighten plot structure.

PIONEERED the surprise-but-inevitable twist, now a defining trait of the genre.

Multimedia

Interactive Informational Graphic

FIRST PLACE

Riva Jain, Carmel High School, Carmel, Indiana

“This is truly a multimedia entry with the inclusion of audio, informational graphics, wonderful illustrations and suggestions for further research and enjoyment of the topic (popular Agatha Christie books and movie adaptations). The ‘Speak Ups’ quotes from students including their images, give this format an even more personalized human touch. The designer succeeded mightily in making this an engaging piece.”



Multimedia

Interactive Informational Graphic

SECOND PLACE

Devyn Hansen, Ella Lu, Eza Ahmad, Katelyn Chen, Keira Kress, Marianne Guo, Carmel High School, Carmel, Indiana

“There are many wonderful elements in this graphic that work harmoniously, so it’s easy to digest. The consistent style of the illustrations are baked together with a warm color palette, and the links to online recipes are a nice interactive touch. The ‘Speak Ups,’ quotes from students including their images, make this format more personalized to students. Delicious!”



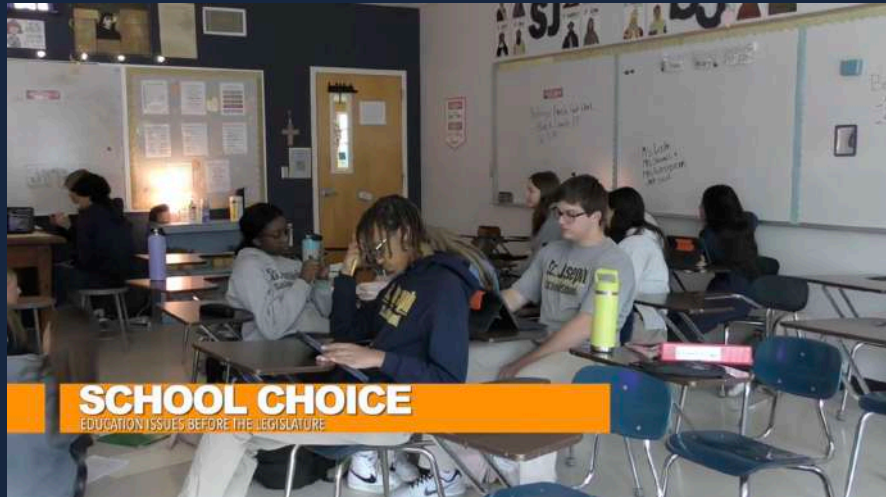
Multimedia

Interactive Informational Graphic

THIRD PLACE

Ayah Alsheikha, Madeline O'Malley, Reese Benge, Pleasant Valley High School, Bettendorf, Iowa

“Nothing may encourage reader engagement to a graphic more than a crossword puzzle, and this one is designed very well. The clues are challenging but not so much so that they dissuade readers from trying to solve the puzzle. The background and accompanying art do not distract from the puzzle areas, so writing on a printed version is fun. Kudos to this team for creating the piece.”



Multimedia

News Show

FIRST PLACE

Bruin News Now Staff, St. Joseph Catholic School, Madison, Mississippi

“This show covers a variety of important and hard-hitting topics. Each is presented well both in terms of reporting and production quality. The show looks and feels professional.”



Multimedia

News Show

SECOND PLACE

RNN Season 10 Episode 14, Huntley High School, Algonquin, Illinois

“This submission is a great balance between depth of content and production values. The show feels engaging while the content is varied and provides viewers with a range of stories, ideas and topics.”



Multimedia

News Show

THIRD PLACE

**Dan Nguyen, Payton Simons, Leyna Huynh,
Wichita Southeast High School, Wichita, Kansas**

“The variety and depth of the stories are standouts here. There is a keen focus on news values and on covering stories that are impactful both to the school and the community at large.”

Multimedia

News Show

HONORABLE MENTION

The Ax Media Staff, Oakwood High School, Oakwood, Ohio



Multimedia

Multimedia Feature/News Package

FIRST PLACE

**Angelina Tao, Emilyn Sun, Bellaire High School,
Bellaire, Texas**

“This is such a wonderful, fun feature that is timely and appeals to your student audience. The variety of interactives in the feature as well as the branding makes this a cohesive package.”



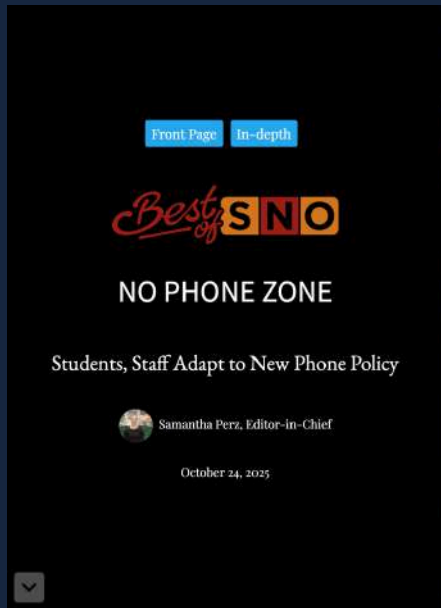
Multimedia

Multimedia Feature/News Package

SECOND PLACE

**Staff, Clarke Central High School, Athens,
Georgia**

“Great job covering Hispanic Heritage Month in a variety of ways. The staff gives historically underrepresented voices a platform in multiple story packages.”



Multimedia

Multimedia Feature/News Package

THIRD PLACE

**Samantha Perz, Aidan Gallagher, Marquette
High School, Chesterfield, Missouri**

“Samantha does a great job covering the issue locally and nationally, visually and verbally. Great job!”

Multimedia

Multimedia Feature/News Package

HONORABLE MENTION

Allison Washburn, Ella Lu, Carmel High School, Carmel, Indiana

Charlotte Wang, Shanghai American School Pudong Campus, Shanghai, China

Zoey Walker, Hannah McKinney, Addison McConkey, Scarlett Mahy, Martin Schmalzbauer, Nixa High School, Nixa, Missouri



THE GLORY OF '85

Multimedia

Multimedia Sports Package

FIRST PLACE

Liya Taylor, David Wang, Lea D'Angelo, Clarke
Central High School, Athens, Georgia

“Honestly, I don’t know if there is a box you didn’t tic on this package. Video: yes. Photo: check. Multiple graphics: check check. You have done the 1985 team proud with this package. You have multiple entry points and allow for multiple type of readers to access the information.”



Multimedia

Multimedia Sports Package

SECOND PLACE

**Kye Streetman, David Wang, Jay Braswell,
Merren Hines, Dream Freeman, Lea D'Angelo,
Clarke Central High School, Athens, Georgia**

"This is a really nice wrap-up of the previous game and preview of this year's championship. You have a lot of information organized in an easily digestible way that is visually appealing. The illustration is really well done."

Rowland Returns To Volleyball Court After 10-Month Recovery

By [Kane Manfull](#) and [Owen Gonzalez](#)

Published: May 16, 2025



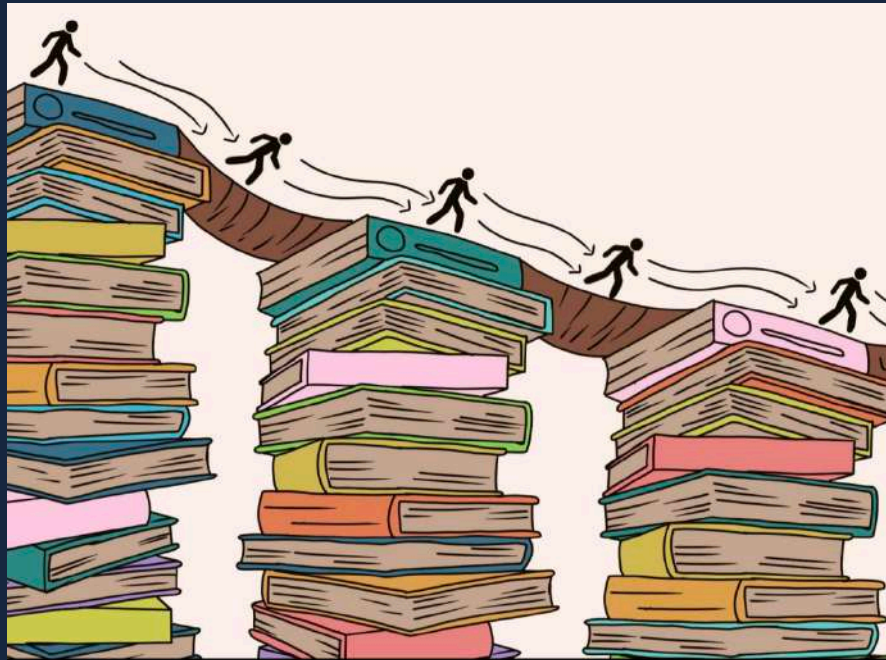
Multimedia

Multimedia Sports Package

THIRD PLACE

**Kane Manfull, Owen Gonzalez, Francis Howell
North High School, Saint Charles, Missouri**

“Wonderful video package — nicely produced and shot. I like the subheads to break up the story. I do wish there was some sort of graphic (a timeline or fast facts box).”



Literacy rates across the United States are on the decline.

Athira Kasthuri

East needs to address declining literacy rates

Multimedia

Multimedia Opinions Package

FIRST PLACE

Chloe Ren, Abby Auerbach, Claire Ding, Grace Li, Cherry Hill High School East, Cherry Hill, New Jersey

“It was nice to see strong, well researched opinions from multiple students in the text. One of the elements that set this entry apart was the video, which included thoughtful questions for the teachers, concise answers/editing and strong production techniques. The videographer did a wonderful job of lighting and choosing clean settings for backgrounds, that made this go way beyond typical ‘talking head’ setups. The pull quotes and ‘read page’ graphic were also nice additions to pull in reader engagement. Well done.”

QUILL & SCROLL
100th
Anniversary



Multimedia

Multimedia Opinions Package

SECOND PLACE

Naomi VanDyne, Carly Hedrich, Katie Paul, Jersey Dubis, Haley Beffa, Lennon Sharp, Francis Howell North High School, Saint Charles, Missouri

“The text helps set the scene and introduces the topic with multiple sources. Nice job in reaching out to local experts. The video is a big plus in this package as it identifies the interviewed subjects well, uses multiple angles and has a friendly voiceover. The stop motion is a fun addition. Perhaps the most fun is the ‘choose your own adventure’ illustrated recycling path for multiple objects. This all comes together in a wonderful package.”



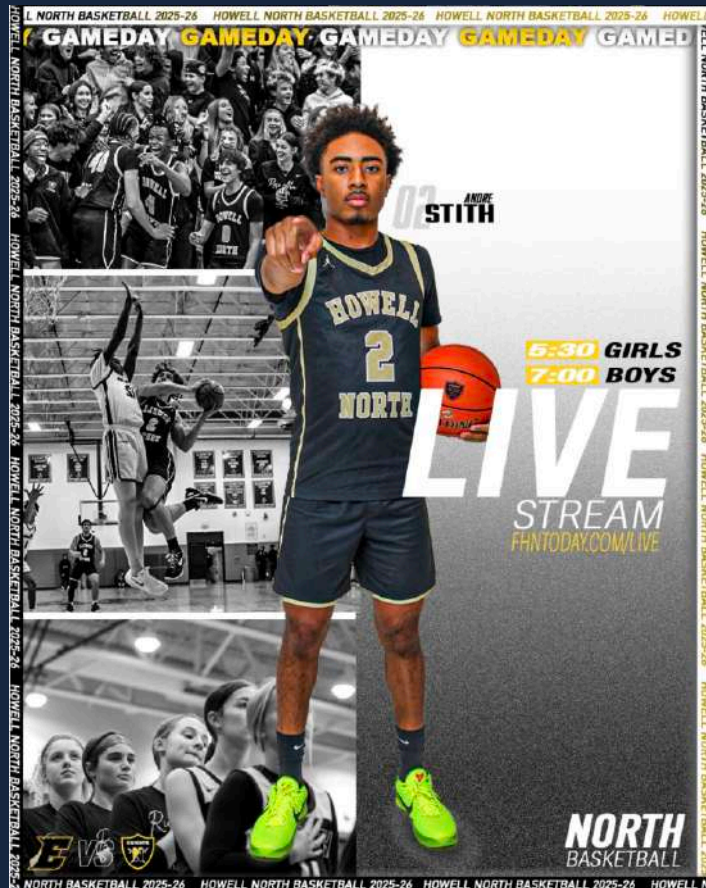
Multimedia

Multimedia Opinions Package

THIRD PLACE

Sage Kelly, Parkway West High School, Ballwin, Missouri

“The author tackled a very personal and difficult subject with welcome authenticity and relatability. The text is bolstered by strong research that gives readers historical insight and examples of the social contexts of the point of view. Interactivity was enhanced with inclusion of the timeline and survey chart infographic. The most meaningful addition was perhaps the wide-ranging (sometimes heartbreaking) experiences quoted by several other students.”



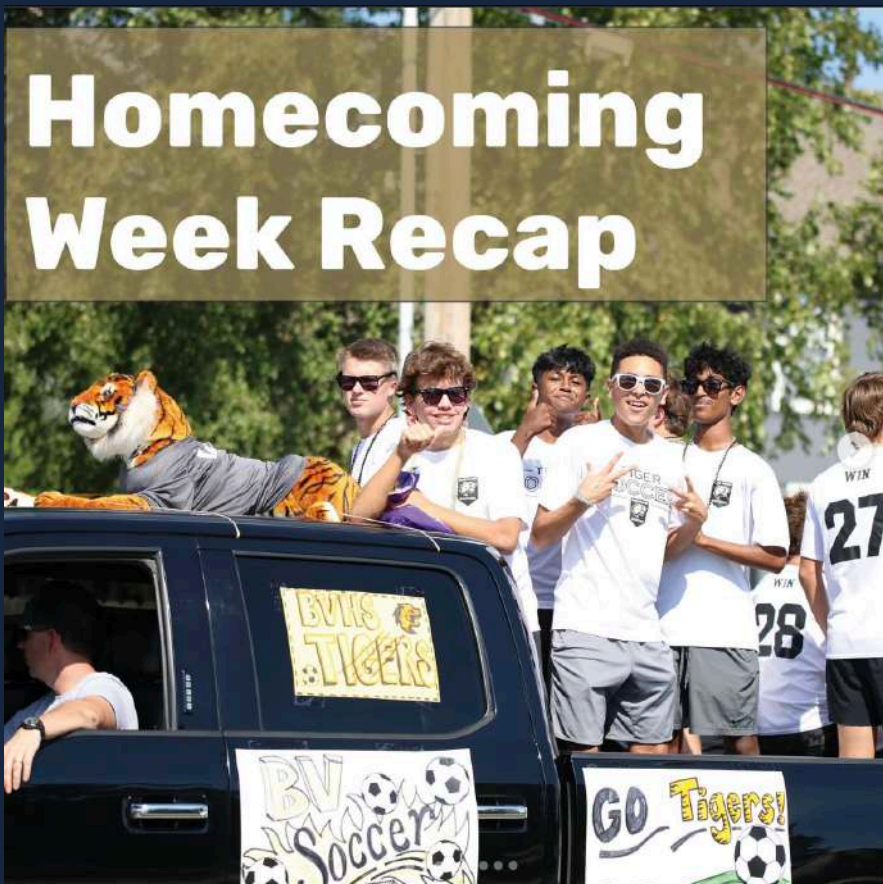
Multimedia

Social Media

FIRST PLACE

FHNgameday Staff, Francis Howell North High School, Saint Charles, Missouri

“Great job having a diverse collection of formats and designs for your social media posts. They are all engaging to viewers, offer new and helpful information and are well made for social media.”



Multimedia

Social Media

SECOND PLACE

Sami Sandler, Emme McGuire, Ben Werner, Lucy James, Jackie Chang, Paige Faulkner, Cady Reynolds, Emily Koslowski, Blue Valley High School, Overland Park, Kansas

“The different types of post that adapt to each story format really elevate this use of social media. One way to make it even stronger would be to have captions on all posts!”



Multimedia

Social Media

THIRD PLACE

Frances Bell, Westridge School, Pasadena, California

“Great use of consistent font and branding styles to keep the posts cohesive. The captions are informative and easy to follow.”



Multimedia

News Content Creator/Influencer

SECOND PLACE

Brogan Smith, Ankeny High School, Ankeny, Iowa

“This is such a creative way to stay engaged with the student body! Good job creating a consistent series.”



Multimedia

Beginning Podcaster

FIRST PLACE

Drew Foos, Amaya Cruz, Syndey Treon, Lake Braddock High School, Burke, Virginia

“The students do a great job in the first episode explaining the premise of the podcast, why they want to tell this story and how it relates to the student audience. Host are articulate and have great intonation and natural speech. Interviews are relevant and include strong questions. Nice pacing as well. Great job!”



Multimedia

Beginning Podcaster

SECOND PLACE

**Sophia Blew, Minnehaha Academy, Minneapolis,
Minnesota**

“Has a very specific scope that is unique and has a growing audience. Great interviews and interviewees! Sophia obviously knows her stuff and does a great job asking questions and eliciting strong answers.”



Multimedia

Beginning Podcaster

THIRD PLACE

**Charlotte Wang, Shanghai American School
Pudong Campus, Shanghai, Shanghai/China**

“Has a very specific scope that is unique and has a growing audience. Great interviews and interviewees! Charlotte obviously knows her stuff and does a great job asking questions and eliciting strong answers.”



Multimedia

Beginning Social Media Journalist

FIRST PLACE

Mia Levi, Van Nuys High School, Van Nuys, California

“Mia’s portfolio showcases a wide variety of social media skills. Her on camera presence is strong and her posts are clear and informative.”



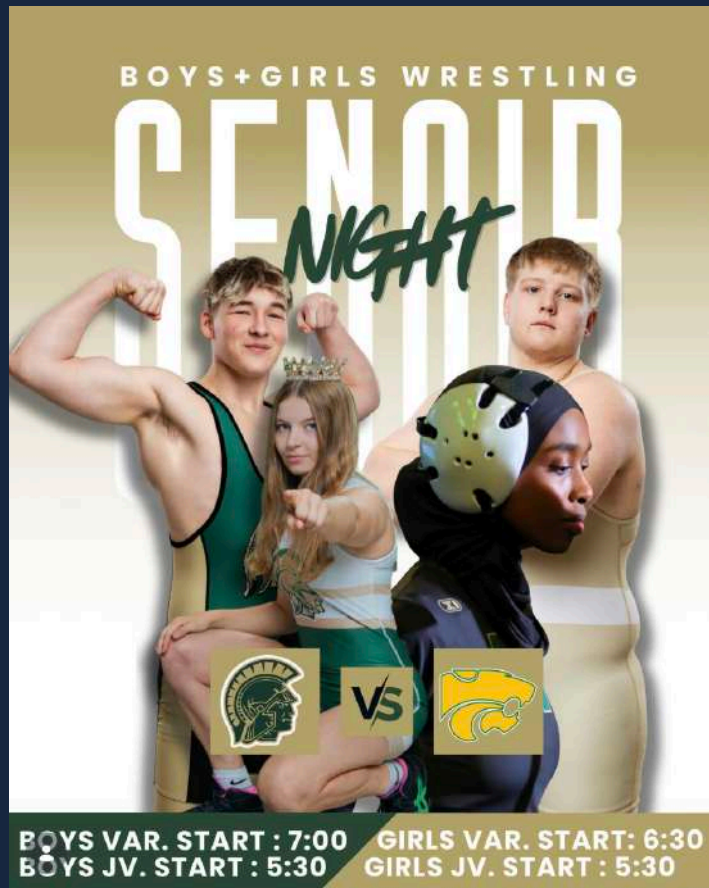
Multimedia

Beginning Social Media Journalist

SECOND PLACE

Racheal Wang, Los Altos High School, Los Altos, California

“Rachel's posts really shine through the photos, but the captions also do a great job adding context. Great work covering important school events.”



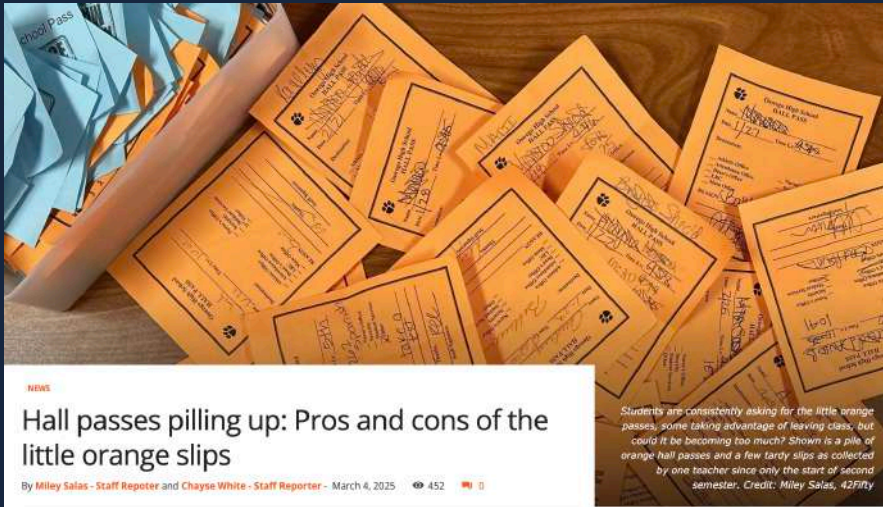
Multimedia

Beginning Social Media Journalist

THIRD PLACE

Emmerson Reimers, Iowa City West High School, Iowa City, Iowa

“Emmerson’s design skills are very strong and well displayed through the portfolio. Nice work combining information and graphics.”



Multimedia

Beginning Multimedia Journalist

FIRST PLACE

Miley Salas, Chayse White, Oswego High School, Oswego, Illinois

“Miley and Chayse do a great job of telling a story about a topic that would typically be considered ‘boring’ to cover. Adding a video to the written piece that is not overly long and that adds viewer/reader input brings the story to life. Good use of LQTQ in the written story and nice hyperlink.”



Multimedia

Beginning Multimedia Journalist

SECOND PLACE

**James Dukes, St. Joseph Catholic School,
Madison, Mississippi**

“Good on-air presence with clear enunciation and intonation. James shows true potential with the combination of strong presence and smart videography skills.”



Multimedia

Beginning Multimedia Journalist

THIRD PLACE

**Charlie Smith, St. Joseph Catholic School,
Madison, Mississippi**

“Good videography — nice editing and shot composition.
Charlie has good on-air presence and script writing.”



Multimedia

Beginning Videographer

FIRST PLACE

Sophia Johnson, Francis Howell North High School, Saint Charles, Missouri

“Sophia shows a wide range of talent with videography and on-air presence. She has great energy, good enunciation and intonation and strong presence. She illustrates that she can tell multiple types of stories and adapts her energy accordingly. Sophia has a bright future on screen.”



Multimedia

Beginning Videographer

SECOND PLACE

**Cooper Kern, Prosper High School, Prosper,
Texas**

“Great job with B-roll, nat sound and shot composition. Cooper frames interviews properly and finds unique angles to tell the story. Wonderful camera and editing work.”



Multimedia

Beginning Videographer

THIRD PLACE

Lauren Oakes, Oakwood High School, Oakwood, Ohio

“Nice shot sequencing and editing. Lauren does a good job of showing something when she says something, which is a core tenant of videography.”



Multimedia

Middle School Visual

FIRST PLACE

**Teng Long, Chengdu Foreign Languages School,
Chengdu, Sichuan**

“The drawing does a great job using detailed elements to strengthen the overall message. The strategic use of color helps draw attention to important parts of the image, and the facial expressions add emotion that makes the visual more engaging.”



Multimedia

Middle School Multimedia

FIRST PLACE

Owen Holcomb, St. Joseph Catholic School, Madison, Mississippi

“This video does an excellent job of combining multiple sources, using a variety of B-roll and interviews that are edited together smoothly to tell the story of the sports rivalry between the two schools. The video remains engaging from start to finish, beginning with a clear and compelling hook that immediately captures the viewer’s attention.”