2025 CONTEST RULES

The Student Keystone Media Awards contest recognizes high school and college journalism that provides relevance, integrity and initiative in serving readers.

ELIGIBILITY: Entries that are eligible for competition must have been published between January 1, 2024, and December 31, 2024.

Any student at any public, private or parochial Pennsylvania high school, college or university who has had his or her material published in the school news publication may enter the contest. Students who have had their work published on a digital news site may enter the contest provided the site 1) is available to the general public on the Internet and has been so for a minimum of one year; 2) consists of student-generated content and is updated a minimum of once a month; AND 3) is affiliated with (i.e. receiving financial and/or staff support or web hosting service from) a high school, college or university in Pennsylvania.

Individual or team (more than one person) entries may be submitted into the contest. There are no limits on the number of entries each person or team per category may submit. The same exact entry may not be entered in any other category; however, part of a specific entry may be used in more than one category (i.e. news photo or feature photo may be used as part of a photo story). All entries must be uploaded as electronic files. Printed tearsheets are not acceptable as an entry format. Visual and digital elements may be included with the writing entries including apps, videos, audio, photos and graphics. The PNA Foundation cannot determine into which category specific entries should be submitted; nor can we confirm entries submitted (you will receive an Official Entry Form after each successful entry which confirms your entry was submitted correctly).

JUDGES' TIP FOR CREATING WINNING ENTRIES: Be sure your articles include facts and no misinformation. It is extremely important to follow AP Style as well as adhere to facts and correct details in your stories/entries. The AP Stylebook is available online and in print. Visit www. apstylebook.com for more information.

DIVISIONS:

I   **Division I** – four year colleges and universities with enrollment of 10,000 or more.

II   **Division II** – four year colleges and universities with enrollment under 10,000.

III   **Division III** – two year colleges.

IV   **Division IV** – high schools.

DEADLINE TO ENTER: Entries must be received online by 11:59 p.m., Monday, January 20, 2025.

ENTRY FEE: There is a $8 fee per entry for high school entries; $10 fee per entry for Pennsylvania NewsMedia Association (PNA) member colleges and universities; $13 per entry for non-member colleges and universities.

Online payments are recommended and prefered. Online payments must be received via the online contest system by 11:59 p.m. on Monday, January 20, 2025. Visa, Mastercard or American Express are accepted. If you must mail a check, mail-in payments must be received at the Pennsylvania NewsMedia Association Foundation, by Wednesday, January 22, 2025. Make check or money order payable to PNA Foundation. No refunds will be given. No invoices will be processed. Entries without submitted payment will not be judged. Mail-in payments must be submitted with the online entry report by selecting the Calculate Entry Fee button on the Manage Entries page and printing the report of your entries (see instructions on Payment Calculation). Payments should be mailed to the PNA Foundation, 4000 Crums Mill Rd., Ste. 101, Harrisburg, PA 17112. For payment questions, please contact the PNA Foundation at (717) 703-3003.

JUDGING: Entries will be evaluated based on the following: subject matter (worthiness, reader appeal, relevance, full development); presentation (pleasing style, literary excellence, incisiveness, research, enterprise, originality); effectiveness (objectivity, persuasiveness, reader identity, reader response). Pennsylvania news editors and/or collegiate news advisers will judge the contest. The judges reserve the right to not award the number of specified awards per each category or give no awards at all based on the number of entries.

AWARDS: Winners will be notified by early March. The PNA Foundation will supply plaques to each first place winner and certificates for second place and honorable mention winners in attendance at the awards luncheon. The Student Keystone Media Awards Luncheon will be held in Harrisburg in April. Prior to the awards lunch a session featuring professional journalists may be held. More details about the awards luncheon event will be available by March. Certificates not distributed at the event will be mailed. If an event is not held for any reason, plaques and certificates will be mailed to winning schools at no charge.

Sweepstakes Awards will go to the college and high school news publications winning the highest total points in each division. Points are tallied: 10 points for each first place winner, 5 points for each second place winner and 2 points for each honorable mention. Specialty category winners are awarded 10 points each.

BE SURE TO SUBMIT ENTRIES IN THE SPECIALTY CATEGORIES FOR A CHANCE TO BE AWARDED CASH PRIZES!

See complete details on the Specialty Category page of these rules.

HOW TO PREPARE ENTRIES

NOTE: All entries must be uploaded as electronic files. Printed tearsheets are not acceptable as an entry format.

1. Entries are accepted in these formats: PDF, DOC, TXT, JPG, GIF, and PNG.

2. When uploading files, any filename may be used. The BNC website uses information entered (newspaper name, division, category, etc.) to assign a unique code to each file. These codes assign your entries to the proper categories and circulation groups for judging.

3. Newspapers must upload a PDF of the entire page on which the entry appears - not the column or article alone. For examples with more than one page, please combine all pages into one PDF. For entries that contain more than one example, combine the pages of all examples into one PDF.

4. The maximum single uploaded file should not exceed 5 megabytes. It is strongly recommended to compress files to under 3 MB so judging can be done more efficiently. Judges will view your files on their computers, so 300-resolution files are not needed (or helpful - they just hog server space). You can reduce your JPG or PDF file size by re-distilling to 72 dpi. For larger files, you may create more than one PDF (i.e. create a separate PDF for each page or section) and attach all pertinent PDFs to that specific entry. There is no limit to the number of attachments per entry.

NOTE: It is recommended that for extremely large files and for video and audio entries, you host your content online, either by uploading it to a free streaming third-party content website, such as www.Issuu.com, www.YouTube.com, www.vimeo.com, kiwi6.com, tindeck.com, etc., or talk to your IT person about adding it to your organization's website. Make sure your content will be accessible online throughout the contest and awards process. Important: please ensure that items are not behind a paywall or password-protected area. If they are, you must provide username/password information in the Comments section of your entry. Judges may disqualify your entry if work samples are inaccessible.

DEADLINES

Entries and online payments must be received online by
11:59 p.m., Monday, January 20, 2025.
Online payments are recommended.

Mail-in payments must be received at the PNA Foundation by:
Wednesday, January 22, 2025.

Send payment with completed Contest Payment Form to us at:
PNA Foundation/Student Keystone Media Awards Contest
4000 Crums Mill Rd., Ste. 101, Harrisburg, PA 17112

LOGIN INSTRUCTIONS

The online contest system, BetterBNC, is optimized for Google Chrome for PC and MacIntosh. Please have a recent version downloaded and installed for the best contest experience.

LOGIN:

1. Go to www.betternewspapercontest.com.

2. Select "Contestant Login" (located on top bar menu).

3. Select the appropriate contestant type from tabs:

   a. If you are the single point of contact for your organization, select **Contestant Manager**. Note: Once you have submitted two entries, you will receive an email validating your Contestant Manager account, enabling you to create Authorized Entrant accounts to make entries on behalf of your organization. You must click the link provided in the email and follow the online instructions to activate your account, authorize other people to submit entries on your organization's behalf, and/or to submit more entries.

   b. If you received an email authorizing you to submit entries for your organization, select **Authorized Entrant**. Click the link provided in the email and follow the online instructions to activate your account which allows you to submit entries.

4. Select the appropriate Contest – "2025 Student Keystone Media Awards."

5. Select the appropriate News Media Organization (i.e. school and/or newspaper name).

   NOTE: If you haven't entered this contest before, or if your school is not currently listed on the drop down menu, please contact the PNA Foundation at foundation@pa-news.org or (717) 703-3003, so that your organization can be added to the menu. Please allow 48 hours for this process to be completed before you can submit entries.

6. Authorized Entrants only - enter your email address.

7. **Enter your personalized password (if you entered the contest last year) OR enter the temporary password provided to you by the PNA Foundation. Passwords are case sensitive.** Temporary passwords are provided for your first login only; once logged in, you will be required to create a personalized password to use going forward. If your designated Contestant Manager has left your organization, please contact the PNA Foundation at foundation@pa-news.org to have your account updated with new contact information.

8. Click Login.

9. **Click on the "My Account" tab to ensure all pertinent information (contacts, mailing address, etc.) is listed correctly.** Make any necessary changes and click Submit at the bottom of the page. If anything needs to be changed that you do not have access to change, contact the PNA Foundation at foundation@pa-news.org.

2025 ENTRY INSTRUCTIONS

TO SUBMIT ENTRIES:

1. On the Manage Entries page, click Submit Entry. Please be sure your school is shown in the correct circulation group/division as outlined in the general contest rules. If any information is incorrect, contact the PNA Foundation at foundation@pa-news.org.

2. Select "general" from the division drop down menu.

3. Select the appropriate Category from the drop down menu. Be sure to read the Category Note which describes the category's requirements.

4. Complete the Headline/Title field. Use an entry title that will clearly identify your entry for the judges. Don't make the judges guess what they are looking for! For example, use a story's headline or the first several words of the headline. **Do NOT use students names, category name or dates in this field.**

5. Upload all attachments and links for the entry. Be sure all links and attachments for a specific entry are submitted under one entry headline/title. This will ensure you are only billed once for each entry. Click Browse to select a file from your file menu and then click open. Allowed file types are PDF, DOC, TXT, JPG, GIF, and PNG. If more than one attachment is desired for this entry, click on "browse and attach more files" and repeat these steps.

6. Website/URL(s)/Link attachments: If you were unable to create and attach a PDF for this entry and needed to provide a website URL, or if the category asks for website presence for web/audio/video content, enter the URL/Links in this section. **Be sure these webpages remain available through the awards celebration.**

7. Optional: You may add any comments about your entry which may assist in the judging process. **If any links for the entry are behind a Paywall or password protected area, you MUST include a username and password for the judges in this comments box (or on a separate attachment).**

8. Add Credits for those responsible for the entry content. If there are more than four names, please enter Staff. **These names will be merged into winners' reports and award certificates, so be sure names are spelled correctly.**

9. Answer reCAPTCHA and click Submit Entry.

10. After each successful entry, the Official Entry Form will appear. This is confirmation of your entry. (See Login Instructions about Contestant Manager validation, if necessary.)

11. Select Submit Another Entry to submit more entries, or Manage Entries which will allow you to review the entries you've already submitted, or Logout.

TO MANAGE ENTRIES:

1. Review your entries on the Manage Entries page – "entries" are enabled and will be judged; "disabled entries" will not be judged.

2. Use the "Action" links for each individual entry which allow you to view your Official Entry Form/Label, edit an incomplete entry or make certain changes, and toggle any entry between enable/disable.
   NOTE: Every enabled entry will be billed to you, so be sure to disable or delete any duplicate entries.

PAYMENT CALCULATION:

1. On the Manage Entries page, confirm your school name, circulation division and number of entries submitted in the upper right corner.

2. Click Calculate Entry Fee.

3. A list of all your enabled entries will be displayed. Review the list of entries for accuracy. The Total Entry Fee Due is calculated at the bottom of the list.

4. Select the check boxes for the entries for which you want to pay, then:

   a. **If paying online with PayPal or credit card,** click the Pay Now With Card box at the bottom of the page. If you have a PayPal account, you can log in to complete payment. Or you can pay using a credit card by entering your credit card information. There is no requirement for you to establish a PayPal account. Be sure to strictly follow the instructions provided online. After clicking Pay Now, you will receive a confirmation. **During the PayPal process, do not hit your "back" button! Also, be sure the billing name and address information you enter exactly matches your debit/credit account.**

   b. **If paying by check,** click the Pay By Check box at the bottom of the page. You will be taken to a page where you will enter your check details (check number and amount). You will then be able to view a report that indicates which entries are paid, as well as the status of the payment (i.e., paid ck). Please print this report to submit with your check. After your check is received in the mail, your entries will be marked paid as indicated by a "confirmed" status.

5. You may return to your Manage Entries page to confirm your online payment. Payment status will indicate "confirmed" for each entry paid via credit card online. Any other payments will be manually confirmed by PNA Foundation staff upon receipt of payment. **NOTE: The online system will not be available to you after the deadline date, so be sure to print your receipt(s) prior to that date.**

QUESTIONS: If you have questions about the contest rules, visit the PNA website at www.panewsmedia.org or contact the PNA Foundation at foundation@pa-news.org or 717-703-3003.

PENNSYLVANIA NewsMedia ASSOCIATION Foundation