



## **2024 SPJ San Diego Area Journalism Competition CONTEST GUIDELINES**

The 2024 SPJ San Diego Area Journalism Competition recognizes outstanding work by San Diego-area students and professional journalists published or broadcast during the 2023 calendar year.

The contest opens on Monday, Feb. 12, 2024.

The Early Bird entry deadline is Monday, March 4, 2024, at 9 p.m. PST. After that, entry fees will increase. The final deadline is Monday, March 11, 2024, at 9 p.m. PST.

Entry fees can be paid at the end of the online submission process, or by check as long as the payment is postmarked by Tuesday, March 12, 2024. Any entries not paid for by that date will not qualify. Entry fees are nonrefundable.

Identify each person who contributed to the work on the entry form. The way the name appears on the entry form is the way it will appear on the award.

The submitting entrant must create an online contest account. If an outlet has a contest coordinator, that person can create an online “Open Call” account and submit entries on behalf of others. For detailed instructions on submitting entries, see the How to Enter link at <https://spjsandiego.org/> on the Journalism Contest page. If you have questions, send an email to [wendyreports@gmail.com](mailto:wendyreports@gmail.com).

To enter, select the division and category that best fits each entry. A story or work of journalism may be submitted to only one category. Do not enter the same piece in multiple divisions unless there was a substantial difference in producing each variation of the same story or work (i.e. print version vs. audio version). A work submitted in multiple categories within the same division will be rejected at SPJ San Diego's discretion. We will reassign entries submitted to an incorrect division. For example, a weekly or monthly

column in a daily publication must be entered in the daily division, not the non-daily division.

This limitation does not apply to the Top and Special Awards divisions; any given work may be submitted for as many Top and Special Awards as the submitter thinks appropriate.

All entries — with the exception of College Media Best Newspaper entries — must be submitted online as either a URL address, PDF or JPG file, or video or audio link.

Checks and College Media Best Newspaper division entries should be mailed to: San Diego SPJ Journalism Competition, P.O. Box 880482, San Diego, CA 92168

## **ENTRY FEES**

Fees are per entry, regardless of the number of journalists on the entry. SPJ members pay \$10 per entry, non-members pay \$30 per entry and students pay \$5 regardless of membership until March 4. After March 4, SPJ members pay \$20 per entry, professional nonmembers pay \$40 per entry and students pay \$10 per entry.

At least one journalist per entry must be an active SPJ member to qualify for the member rate. If you are not currently a member, you can join at [spj.org/join.asp](http://spj.org/join.asp). We will cross-check all entries submitted at the membership price against a list of current members.

**NOTE:** Public relations and marketing content (e.g., content sponsored, or paid for, by another person or business to benefit that person or business) is not eligible for this contest. San Diego SPJ reserves the right to disqualify such entries and refund entry fees.

## **JUDGING**

Professional journalists judge all submissions. Judges will select winners in each category in which exemplary work is submitted. Winners are announced at San Diego SPJ's annual awards banquet held each summer.

Each first-place winning entry receives one plaque; all other winners receive certificates. Additional plaques can be ordered at the winner's expense by contacting SPJ San Diego after the banquet; additional certificates are available upon request at no charge.

## **DIVISIONS AND CATEGORIES**

**TOP AWARDS** San Diego SPJ presents an annual Excellence in Journalism Award and a Distinguished Coverage award.

**SPECIAL AWARDS** San Diego SPJ presents special awards named in memory of journalism professionals and individuals who contributed significantly to the journalism profession or community. Other awards are for outstanding work addressing diversity and First Amendment issues. Special award entries can come from individuals at any outlet and can be submitted in other appropriate divisions.

**DAILY REPORTING AND WRITING** This division includes print and online reporting and writing. "Daily" refers to outlets that publish new content five or more times a week.

**NON-DAILY REPORTING AND WRITING** This division includes print and online reporting and writing. "Non-daily" refers to outlets that publish new content four or fewer times a week.

**DIGITAL** This division is open to work published online, whether for a print publication, TV or radio station, podcast, social media site, or online-only publication.

**DESIGN ELEMENTS** This division is open to work published in daily and non-daily print publications.

**AUDIO** This division is open to audio work from any professional media outlet.

**VIDEO** This division is open to video work from any professional media outlet.

**COLLEGE MEDIA** This division is open to college outlets. Please

note: College students whose work appeared in professional publications and/or broadcasts must submit that work in professional divisions.

## TOP AWARDS

**SPJ Excellence in Journalism Award (formerly Mark of Excellence Award):** This top award honors the best story, series, or segment. Submit your best work along with an essay of no more than 500 words explaining why it stands out in San Diego journalism. Open to all. Entry fee is \$50.

**Distinguished Coverage Award (formerly the Wildcard Award):** San Diego SPJ selects a new topic each year that dominated local headlines. This year's topic is **barriers**. This topic may have been completed by a single reporter or a reporting team at the outlet. Topic includes -- but is not limited to -- real or perceived barriers, such as physical walls, public officials putting up barriers to reporting, stories about barriers people face in finding employment, accessing health care or education, financial barriers, etc. Each outlet should submit its best stories, series or show(s). Entries are limited to no more than five components (i.e. stories, segments). Entries must also include an essay of no more than 500 words on why the coverage merits recognition. Open to all outlets. Entry fee is \$50. Outlets may make multiple entries if they are by different teams/reporters.

## SPECIAL AWARDS

**Gloria Penner Award for Political Affairs Reporting:** The award, named for longtime KPBS broadcast journalist Gloria Penner, recognizes the journalist whose story or series represented the best in local political journalism. Like Penner, this journalist will demonstrate a deep understanding of civic issues. Open to all journalists. The entry fee is \$15 for Early Bird (through March 4) SPJ members, \$35 for Early Bird nonmembers. Starting March 5, SPJ members will pay a \$25 entry fee, and nonmembers will pay \$45.

**Neil Morgan Community Impact Award:** This award, named for San Diego journalism icon Neil Morgan who helped shape outlets including The San Diego Union-Tribune and Voice of San Diego, recognizes the local journalist whose story or series achieved the greatest community impact. Entries should include an essay of no more than 500 words explaining what the work accomplished and what impact it had on the community. Open to all journalists. The entry fee is \$15 for Early Bird

(through March 4) SPJ members, and \$35 for Early Bird nonmembers. Starting March 5, SPJ members will pay a \$25 entry fee and nonmembers will pay \$45.

**Sol Price Prize for Responsible Journalism:** This award, named for entrepreneur and philanthropist Sol Price, will honor a journalist whose work meets ethical standards while showing uncommon sensitivity. The journalist pursued the truth despite unpopularity, economic retribution, or physical harm. Entries should include a 500-word essay about how the journalist overcame challenges to pursue the story. Open to all journalists. The entry fee is \$15 for Early Bird (through March 4) SPJ members, and \$35 for Early Bird nonmembers. Starting March 5, SPJ members will pay a \$25 entry fee, and nonmembers will pay \$45.

**First Amendment Award:** This award honors the story, series, or commentary for which the author or authors had difficulty accessing information. Stories might demonstrate skillful use of the California Public Records Act or the federal Freedom of Information Act or a successful challenge to a violation of California's public meeting laws. Entries must include an essay of no more than 500 words explaining how the author(s) made use of open records or open meeting laws. Open to all journalists. The entry fee is \$15 for Early Bird (through March 4) SPJ members, and \$35 for Early Bird nonmembers. Starting March 5, SPJ members will pay a \$25 entry fee, and nonmembers will pay \$45.

**Herbert Lockwood “Woody” Award:** This award, named for journalist, historian, and humorist Herbert Lockwood, honors the best local humor writing. Open to all journalists. The entry fee is \$15 for Early Bird (through March 4) SPJ members, and \$35 for Early Bird nonmembers. Starting March 5, SPJ members will pay a \$25 entry fee, and nonmembers will pay \$45.

**Diversity Award:** This award honors a story or series that provides outstanding coverage of communities not typically represented in local stories, or an outlet that deserves recognition for outstanding inclusion of diverse voices in everyday news coverage. Entries should include examples of the work, along with an essay of no more than 500 words about how efforts were made to better serve underrepresented communities. Open to all journalists. The entry fee is \$15 for Early Bird (through March 4) SPJ members, and \$35 for Early Bird nonmembers. Starting March 5, SPJ members will pay a \$25 entry fee, and

nonmembers will pay \$45.

**James Julian Memorial Award:** This award, named for San Diego State University journalism professor emeritus James L. Julian, honors the best community service story or series. Open to those who work for newspapers with circulation below 65,000 subscribers. The entry fee is \$15 for Early Bird (through March 4) SPJ members, and \$35 for Early Bird nonmembers. Starting March 5, SPJ members will pay a \$25 entry fee, and nonmembers will pay \$45.

### **DAILY REPORTING AND WRITING**

Arts/entertainment story – performing arts

Arts/entertainment story – visual arts

Breaking news story

Business story

Column (submit three examples)

Criminal justice story

Education story

Environment story

Feature story – light subject

Feature story – serious subject

Food story (not a review)

Government story

Health story

Housing development story

Housing insecurity story

Investigative/enterprise story — single subject

Investigative/enterprise story — series (no more than five examples)

Multicultural story

News story (not breaking news)

Opinion/editorial

Politics/election story

Profile

Review/criticism

Science/technology story

Series — any subject (no more than five examples)

Sports story

Travel

### **NON-DAILY REPORTING AND WRITING**

Arts/entertainment story – performing arts

Arts/entertainment story – visual arts

Breaking news story  
Business story  
Column (submit three examples)  
Criminal justice story  
Education story  
Environment story  
Feature story – light subject  
Feature story – serious subject  
Food story (not a review)  
Government story  
Health story  
Housing development story  
Housing insecurity story  
Investigative/enterprise story — single subject  
Investigative/enterprise story — series (no more than five examples)  
Multicultural story  
News story (not breaking news)  
Opinion/editorial  
Politics/election story  
Profile  
Review/criticism  
Science/technology story  
Series — any subject (no more than five examples)  
Sports story  
Travel

## **DIGITAL**

Blog  
Data visualization  
Entertainment website  
Multimedia presentation  
News website  
Social media account  
Social media storytelling

## **DESIGN ELEMENTS** (formerly Photography/Headlines)

Feature photograph  
Breaking news photograph  
Headline writing (submit three examples)  
Layout and page design (single story or series — no more than five examples)  
Photo essay  
Sports photo

## **VIDEO**

Breaking news story

Business/consumer — single story or series (no more than five examples)

Community service — single story or series (no more than five examples)

Government – single story or series (no more than five examples)

Investigative/enterprise — series (no more than five examples)

Investigative/enterprise — single story

News feature – light news reporting

News feature – serious news reporting

Newscast – morning

Newscast – evening

Photography

Politics / election – single story or series (no more than five examples)

Sports story

Video editing

## **AUDIO**

Breaking news story

Business/consumer — single story or series (no more than five examples)

Community service — single story or series (no more than five examples)

Feature series (no more than five examples)

Feature story

Investigative/enterprise — series (no more than five examples)

Investigative/enterprise — single story

News

Newscast

Podcast

Sports story

## **COLLEGE MEDIA**

Arts/entertainment story

Best newspaper

Best news media website

Column (submit three examples)

Feature photo

Feature series (no more than five examples)

Feature story

Headline writing (submit three examples)

In-depth reported story



Layout and design — single story or series (no more than five examples)

Multicultural story

Newscast

News photo

News series (no more than five examples)

News story

Opinion/editorial

Original illustration or cartoon

Photo essay

Review/criticism

Sports photo

Sports story

*Thank you for participating in the 2024 SPJ San Diego Area Journalism Competition. We look forward to celebrating your work!*

*Questions? Check the San Diego SPJ website ([spjsandiego.org](http://spjsandiego.org)) for commonly asked questions, or contact contest coordinator, Wendy Fry, at [wendyreports@gmail.com](mailto:wendyreports@gmail.com) or 619-395-8440.*