

The Reporter



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The Nation's Oldest National Honorary Collegiate Journalism Organization

Announcing...

Contest Results and Major Awards

By Mary Beth Earnhardt
Editor

The results from the 2005 SCJ National Contest are now available. This year we saw many new entries from our chapters, and we are pleased to report that students, productions, and publications from 21 chapters won awards.

The big winners were: Wartburg College with 19, Slippery Rock University with 16, and SUNY New Paltz with 14.

Many schools won awards for both their print publications and their broadcast entries.

"We were very pleased with the participation in this year's contest," said Dr. Arthur Barlow, SCJ National Executive Director. "This is one of the services we provide for our chapters, a National Contest that is judged by ONLY professional journalists. All the students should be proud of their efforts."

The National Contest Director is Mary Jennings from the University of North Alabama. This year she was assisted by the SCJ Officer-at-Large, Vivian Wagner from Muskingum College.

"Vivian and Mary did a great deal of work," said Barlow. "All chapter members should know that this is a major undertaking, and without the work of these two responsible and dedicated National Council members, the contest would not be possible."

In addition to the results of the Na-

tional Contest, winners have been announced for the three SCJ major awards.

This year's Student Journalist of the Year is La-Aja Wiggins. La-Aja was nominated for her coverage of major budget cuts at Clarion University of Pennsylvania. La-Aja is the News Editor of *The Clarion Call*.

"We are delighted that La-Aja's talents are being recognized at the national level. She is a bright, dedicated, hard-working student journalist, and is very deserving of this

award.," said Sue Hilton, adviser for SCJ Clarion.

The McDonald award for outstanding chapter in 2005 goes to the chapter at Virginia Wesleyan College. "What makes me proudest of the McDonald Award is that it recognizes everyone in the chapter," said VWC Chapter Adviser and SCJ National President, William Ruehlmann. "It's testimony for a team. And though you won't

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A Quick Look at some of the 2005 Contest Results

McDonald Award for Chapter of the Year: Virginia Wesleyan College

Barker Award for Adviser of the Year: Kate Hastings, Susquehanna University

Student Journalist of the Year Award: La-Aja Wiggins, Clarion University of Pennsylvania

Magazine Overall Excellence:

- First Place: Clarke Catalyst, Clarke College

Yearbook Overall Excellence (small schools):

- First Place: Harding University
- Second Place: Evangel University

Newspaper Overall Excellence:

- First Place: The Carroll News, John Carroll University
- Second Place: The Harding Bison, Harding University
- Third Place: Viking News, Ocean County College
- MORE OFTEN THAN WEEKLY, First Place: The Daily Eastern News, Eastern Illinois University

Television Broadcast News:

- First Place: WTV8 News, Wartburg College
- Second Place: News 11 Live, Valdosta State University
- Third Place: Channel 5 News, Clarion University of Pennsylvania

Debut of sex advice column led to introduction of editorial policy

College officials, student newspaper editors debate outsourcing paper

NORTH CAROLINA – In an attempt to resolve debates over a proposed policy of prior review of the student newspaper, Craven Community College may outsource the *Campus Communicator* to a private publisher.

At an April 4 student council meeting, Craven's executive vice president and chief academic officer Cindy Hess proposed outsourcing the newspaper to Freedom ENC Communications, a local newspaper publisher, as a "compromise meant to end the dissent and threat of lawsuits" by student journalists, according to the *New Bern Sun Journal*. A 10-1 vote supported the proposal, but no final decision will be made until a vote by the college's board of trustees.

College spokesman Sandy Wall said the proposal would grant a one-year license to Freedom ENC to publish the newspaper, with students remaining on the newspaper's staff. The *New Bern Sun Journal* reported on April 5 that Freedom ENC would be in charge of the *Communicator*'s editorial content and advertising department. Student Jason Thomas criticized the proposal in the article as being the college's "easy way out" of resolving their attempt to infringe on students' free speech. But Wall responded that the proposal is a "win-win-win scenario for all parties."

Debate over the proposed prior review policy, which would have created a committee made up of administrators and students leaders to review information when there is a disagreement between the editor and advisers on content, stems from a sex advice column that premiered in the *Campus Communicator* on March 4. Amanda Worley's column, "Between the Sheets," gave suggestions to help people motivate their sex lives, including "dancing or stripping" and "role playing." Editor Corey Friedman said that



over the next three days, the newspaper was "flooded" with complaints. People were also complaining to the school administration, threatening to withdraw their donations and not send their children to the school.

Friedman cancelled the column, and the newspaper apologized and made it "known publicly that that column would not run again," he said. On March 7 he met with Craven Community College President Scott Ralls, who told Friedman that he was very distressed because of the negative attention Worley's column brought to the college.

Wall said the dispute surrounding Worley's column "heightened the sense that the newspaper had no policy in place and that there was a critical need for one."

On March 10 the newspaper's senior editors met with Ralls and several other administrators who spoke more specifically about drafting an editorial policy.

Friedman said the staff agreed to draft the new editorial policy because there was no policy in place and they felt it was necessary to have one in writing. However, he said, at that time he and the other staff members did not think it would contain mandatory prior review and a "censorship committee."

Wall said the "Advisory Committee" was intended to "advise the staff on questions related to unprotected speech, such as libel, obscenity, invasion of a fellow student's privacy and matters disruptive to the college's educational mission." However, he said, the committee would not be able to pull material from the

publication "simply because it presents the college or another student organization in a negative manner."

The notion of implementing an editorial policy was first raised in October, when the newspaper conflicted with the school administration over printing the name and address of a student assault suspect. All 1,100 copies of the newspaper were held up by school administration at the college mailroom until Friedman consented to conceal the information with correction fluid.

Wall said several students, including the alleged suspect, contacted administrators about the issue. After a meeting with Friedman, the newspaper staff and administrators agreed that written guidelines should be developed for the newspaper. Friedman and adviser Monica Dowe drafted about 20 pages of guidelines, which they planned on passing to the student council for approval, but the college administration drafted the new editorial policy before these guidelines were passed. Friedman said the guidelines he and Dowe drafted would have been acceptable to the newspaper staff because it did not subject the *Communicator* to prior review. However, he said he believes the school used the guidelines that the newspaper created and turned them into a more restrictive editorial policy.

Wall said the new proposal to outsource the *Communicator* stems from "a desire to resolve this divisive, time-consuming disagreement to everyone's satisfaction," and it will ultimately improve the school's relationship with the newspaper.

he board of trustees will vote on April 19 to approve or reject the proposal to outsource the *Campus Communicator*.

This story is reprinted with permission of the Student Press Law Center. For more information about the issues of the student press check online at www.splc.org. This story was written by Diane Krauthamer.

Book Review

By Dr. Douglas S. Campbell
Lock Haven University of PA

Jim Pumarlo. *Bad News and Good Judgment: A Guide to Reporting on Sensitive Issues in a Small-town Newspaper.* Oak Park, IL: Marion Street Press, 2005. 116 pp. \$19.95 pbk.

Editor of the Red Wing, Minnesota, Red Wing Republican Eagle for more than two decades, Jim Pumarlo provides in this little book a large dose of what student newspaper reporters and editors lack: valuable experience. Although much of the advice he offers could be characterized as common sense, it is presented in a highly helpful and concisely clear manner.

One strength of the book, for in-

stance, is the illustrations Pumarlo uses from his own experiences, illustrations that highlight some of the most difficult decisions journalists often are required to make. The chapter on photos, for example, opens with a focus on a truck driver whose truck collided with a motorcyclist, killing the cyclist. The photo at issue shows a passerby comforting the driver, who clearly is distraught.

The next portion of the chapter illustrates another strength of the book: suggestions for what Pumarlo calls parameters or guides to journalistic conundrums. He provides two for accident photos: don't show body parts and avoid showing blood.

Student editors interested in developing newsroom policies can find a third strength of the book: sample policies. Chapter 12 presents sample policies for accidents, business news, confidential sources, election coverage, letters to the editor, local editorials, obituaries, proclamations, public records, sports suspensions, suicides,

weddings and civil unions.

The chapter on covering sexual abuse should prove especially helpful for student journalists. It begins with an actual case from the Minnesota News Council and proceeds with a number of incisive questions. It is news? Is it true? Did you talk to the subject of the story? How will you justify a decision? Is the report fair? Is it a public or private issue? Will the story make a difference?

His answers to these questions raise points not immediately obvious to a novice journalist. He suggests, for example, that reporters ask permission before interviewing the victim of sexual abuse. He warns them never to say, "I know how you feel," because you don't know. He cautions them to be especially sensitive to imputation of blame.

I recommend that student journalists first read this book from cover to cover, then put it next to their computer and refer to it when unsure how to handle a story, and finally draw up today, not tomorrow, a series of policies based on the sample ones he provides.

Have a legal question? Check out SPLC online to find help.

www.splc.org

Also, remember to start thinking about next Fall. The Fall 2005 ACP/CMA National Convention will take place in New Orleans, LA on October 26—October 30. Look for SCJ events in the upcoming program. For more about CMA check online

at: www.collegemedia.org

and about ACP check online at:

www.studentpress.org.

Contest

-from page one-

catch them saying it, I will: They ARE the best!"

The Barker Award for Adviser of the year goes to Kate Hastings at Susquehanna University.

"I am extremely pleased that Dr. Hastings has been recognized for her contributions to SCJ," said Barlow.

"Since she charted the Susquehanna chapter we have always counted on their presence at College Media Days and other venues and a strong and loyal chapter membership." Barlow added, "After all behind every outstanding SCJ chapter is a great adviser."

National Council

President

Dr. William Ruehlmann
1584 Wesleyan Drive
Virginia Wesleyan College
Norfolk/Va Beach, VA 23502-5599
(757)455-3419 FAX (757)461-5025
E-mail: wjruehlmann@vwc.edu

Past President

Dr. Sheridan Barker
Carson-Newman College
Box 1869
Jefferson City, TN 37760
(423)581-7731

First Vice President National Contest Director

Mary Jennings
University of North Alabama
Box 5027
Florence, AL 35632
(256)765-4426 FAX (256)765-4275
E-mail: mcjennings@una.edu

Second Vice President

Shirley Shedd
Communication Department
1111 N. Glenstone
Evangel College
Springfield, MO 65802
(417)865-2811
E-mail: shedds@evangel.edu

Third Vice President

Dr. Michael Longinow
Department of Communication
RM 400 Morrison Hall
Macklin Dr.
Asbury College
Wilmore, KY 40390-1198
(606)858-3511 ext. 248
E-mail: mlonginow@asbury.edu

Executive Director

Arthur H. Barlow
Becker Hall
Clarion University
Clarion, PA 16214
(814)393-2515 FAX (814)393-2186
E-mail: a.barlow@clarion.edu

Chapter Representatives

Dr. Joe Mirando
SLU 10428
Hammond, LA 70402
(504)549-3374
E-mail: rhi@thunder-rain.com

Cathy Keuhner
Shenandoah University
1460 University Drive
Winchester, VA 22601
(540)678-4338
E-mail: ckeuhner@su.edu

Frank Barnas
Communication Arts Department
Valdosta State University
Valdosta, GA 31698
(229)259-5087 FAX (229)245-3799
E-mail: fbarnas@mail.valdosta.edu

Dr. Sheridan Barker
Carson-Newman College
Box 1869
Jefferson City, TN 37760
(423)581-7731



Notes from the Executive Director



Ok, so it's mid-April, past tax day and May is on the horizon; thoughts of summers past and future emerge, as does the year-end details of SCJ: take note.

Enclosed with this newsletter is the Annual Report and the List of Graduating Seniors for SPJ; advisers please attend to these matters; it's for the benefit of your graduating seniors and the national organization. IF you haven't inducted new members yet - do so quickly. I really dislike policing activities, BUT if you have not inducted at least four new members in a three year period your Chapter is defunct, like Buffalo Bill, and you are no longer eligible to compete in the national contest or for the major awards. It is extremely simple: **INDUCT**.

Regarding the SCJ National Contest. It is always difficult bringing in all the results for approximately 140 final awards. I mailed the list of winners for the 2005 contest last month, and with this newsletter I am including a revised edition. We are now complete. All the awards have been processed and mailed, So let's get started with the clip file for next year's contest. As Mary Beth has noted (see story on page one) there has been fine range and participation for this worthwhile endeavor, and Congratulations are in order for all our recipients this year.

Remember our chosen national philanthropy is the Student Press Law Center. Our appreciation goes to Kevin Z. Smith, the new adviser to the Fairmont State, WV SCJ chapter and to Beth Slusser, the outgoing adviser; between them they have set a fine example for the rest of us in SCJ by raising and sending funds to this fine organization: support SPLC - it is the Student Journalist's best friend.

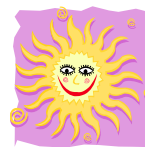
OK , enough for now, think spring because it has sprung, and 'my how happy all the birdies IS', eh.

SCJ Chapter Notes and News

Congratulations to our new members at:

Cabrini College, PA—10 new members;
Tennessee Tech, TN—7 new members;
Fairmont State, WV—4 new members;
Clarion University, PA—8 new members;
Piedmont College, GA—5 new members;
Evangel University, MO—12 new members;
Simpson College, IA—5 new members;
Washburn University, KS—1 new member;
CCBC—Essex, MD—9 new members;
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, FL—7 new members.

SCJ National Office wishes a special congratulations to our newest chapter at the University of Southern Indiana.



The SCJ Reporter

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Editor...Mary Beth Earnhardt

Please send submissions to:

Art Barlow
Becker Hall
Clarion University
Clarion, PA 16214

E-mail:
barlow@clarion.edu
mearnhardt@clarion.edu

