

## 2023 IJEa Newspaper & Digital New Media Contest

### Individual Winners | Division 4 | Enrollment 2,300 to 2,699

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#### BEST ADVERTISEMENT

##### First Place

- Contestant Name: Edwardsville High School
- Entry Title: Don't let high school memories get blurry
- Entry Credit: Caspar Dowdy
- Judge Comment: Yes, a solid idea that delivers on a reason to buy.

##### Second Place

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
  - Entry Title: All Star Sports
  - Entry Credit: Anjali Kota
  - Judge Comment: Headline, that leads to body copy. Solid work.
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#### BEST ALTERNATIVE STORYTELLING

##### First Place

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
- Entry Title: Changes proposed to D203 music program
- Entry Credit: Adeline Tse, Jay Deegan
- Judge Comment: What a great way to put the story and all its essential parts on social media to become a venue for discussion. I also checked out Deegan's reporting on the subject. This is a good summary and the graphics are helpful.

##### Second Place

- Contestant Name: Edwardsville High School
- Entry Title: What Does the St. Louis Metro Area Have in Store for You This Fall?
- Entry Credit: Caspar Dowdy
- Judge Comment: This is a great way to break down a community calendar into a story. The pen stroke seems to be a little light, and that presents a problem if this page is shared around as a jpg because it becomes less and less legible. Adding a second color to your drawings may help, but that will cost time, using Illustrator's trace function over these or real life images may also help you without costing too much time. The body copy is flawless but I'd prefer a font style that has the lower case i look like an i.

##### Third Place

- Contestant Name: Palatine High School
- Entry Title: Boys Swim & Dive Photo Poll

- Entry Credit: Karim Melek
- Judge Comment: With web headlines especially, you should make them specific to net some traffic off Google. You can also make it the question you asked these guys, making it so the story makes sense even to people who don't read the body text and go straight to the slideshow. This is a good poll, solid pictures, but I do wish there were maybe a few photo submissions by the people you interviewed. That's part of the story that feels missing. Some sort of closer that's something more than photos of individual team members.

### **Honorable Mention**

- Contestant Name: Edwardsville High School
- Entry Title: October Athletes of the Quarter
- Entry Credit: Maggie Terry
- Judge Comment: This tells you just as much as you might want to know and that's what you look for in an Alternative Story Format. It's a good design. However, these appear to be submissions, with no byline. It takes a lot of behind the scenes skill to do a page like this and I recognize it; original body copy however is preferred for this category.

### **Honorable Mention**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: What sequel is better than the original?
- Entry Credit: Joshua Traugott
- Judge Comment: Your use of bookmarks in the YouTube video itself makes this video a solid candidate for ASF. However, you missed Puss n Boots. Putting nameplates up is a pain, but if this were in print, we wouldn't be able to run a quote+mugshot without attribution. Using those elements lends you credibility as well.

### **Competition Comment**

These were great submissions and show a lot of promise. The deciding factor usually resolved with the degree to which a given submission stood on its own while also putting a premium on journalistic effort. This isn't the infographic category, Alternative Story Formats stand apart with greater emphasis on text and engagement. Magazines use ASFs religiously, especially in the front of the book section. Which in the older style magazines, can run really heavy on text, but still run the reader around a gambit of stories and make them feel wordly -- like they read 2x more than they actually did. The style has crept into newsletter and digital-first formats like Axios, and also defunct formats like Quartz' chatbot stories and Vox card stacks. These didn't fail because ASF is dying, rather ASF is becoming ubiquitous with the wider newsroom. Hone this craft and you'll go far.

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## **BEST AUDIO JOURNALISM**

### **First Place**

- Contestant Name: Niles West High School

- Entry Title: The Niles West Podcast Ep 12, Featuring Superintendent Mr. Moore
- Entry Credit: Fiona O'Dwyer, Bryanna Ayala
- Judge Comment: An engaging interview!

### **Second Place**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: SquashTales
- Entry Credit: Joshua Traugott
- Judge Comment: Interesting subject!

### **Third Place**

- Contestant Name: Niles West High School
- Entry Title: The Niles West Sports Talk Podcast Ep 14, Featuring Superintendent Mr. Moore
- Entry Credit: Quinn Gilbert, John Przekota
- Judge Comment: None

### **Honorable Mention**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: Stunning Stories
- Entry Credit: Maya Homberg
- Judge Comment: None

### **Competition Comment**

Students considering entering this category should be mindful of the need for entries to make news. And they should make that news clear at the onset of any audio. "Hey, hi and welcome to episode X of this series" is not a compelling open to a podcast. Find a way to get interesting words at the very open of any on-demand audio journalism.

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## **BEST CENTERSPREAD STORY PACKAGE**

### **First Place**

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
- Entry Title: Enrollment down
- Entry Credit: Isabel Zhou, Nathan Yuan, Ivan Thankachen
- Judge Comment: None

### **Second Place**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: Blast from the past: DGS Alumni returns as staff
- Entry Credit: Lauren Miranda, Isabella Shin, Marty Blader, Emma Fudacz, Maya Homberg
- Judge Comment: None

### Third Place

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
- Entry Title: Is AI the end of academic honesty?
- Entry Credit: Claire Yung, Mack Gowan, Jake Pfeiffer, Ziad El Bego
- Judge Comment: None

### Honorable Mention

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
  - Entry Title: Teenage Traps
  - Entry Credit: Isabella Shin, NB Bandera, Emma Fudacz, Maya Homberg, Lauren Miranda, Gabe Gowen
  - Judge Comment: None
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## BEST EDITORIAL CARTOON

### First Place

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: We need to start respecting our bathrooms
- Entry Credit: Itzel Sanchez
- Judge Comment: The comic makes its own cogent point while grabbing readers and pulling them into the accompanying editorial. This comic addresses a serious school-related issue and calls its own readers out -- and makes the protagonist the maintenance staff for a fresh perspective on the injustice caused by slob.

### Second Place

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
- Entry Title: Learning is more than memorization
- Entry Credit: Christine Wang
- Judge Comment: The cartoon packs a triple wallop with three images of students victimized by what passes for assessing learning at the end of every semester. It makes its own point while pulling readers into the accompanying editorial. Readers will identify with all three images -- barfing up stored facts, tearing their hair out and feeling their head explode. The point is likely to go over the head of those in charge of this end-of-semester ritual, but keep at it.

### Third Place

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: Society redefines F-word during the 21st century
- Entry Credit: Ben Abarro
- Judge Comment: The cartoon makes its own clever point about feminism as a shield against the blows of reflexive misogyny. It also should grab readers and pull them into the accompanying editorial.

### **Honorable Mention**

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
- Entry Title: ChatGPT
- Entry Credit: Christine Wang
- Judge Comment: The clever cartoon pokes fun at overreactions to yet another technological challenge in education. The contrast between the irate teacher and oblivious student would pull readers into the accompanying editorial while suggesting that the answer is between these extremes.

### **Competition Comment**

Editorial cartoons at their best should challenge authority and address issues that relate to the school. Think of them as combining critical thinking with artistic talent. Making a strong point in the public interest is a good use of artistic talent. The tenets of the Hutchins Commission should guide the cartoonist in the same way they should guide editorial writers.

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## **BEST FEATURE STORY**

### **First Place**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: Students and staff blossom into 'plant people'
- Entry Credit: Taylor Neal
- Judge Comment: Clever idea for a story. Was a little slow to get to any quotes or personal stories.

### **Second Place**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: Mind, body and mental health: The student-athlete struggle
- Entry Credit: Lauren Miranda
- Judge Comment: Story was a little slow to get to any quotes or personal stories.

### **Third Place**

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
  - Entry Title: When detentions don't work: For some chronically truant students, detention never ends
  - Entry Credit: Nathan Yuan
  - Judge Comment: Felt like a news story, not a feature story. Not sure which was the lead because of the first line without punctuation.
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## **BEST FRONT-PAGE DESIGN**

### **First Place**

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
- Entry Title: Central Times Page 1, Feb. 27, 2023
- Entry Credit: Jeremy Zhao
- Judge Comment: None

### **Second Place**

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
- Entry Title: Central Times Page 1, Dec. 19, 2022
- Entry Credit: Jeremy Zhao
- Judge Comment: None

### **Third Place**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: March 10, 2023
- Entry Credit: Marty Blader
- Judge Comment: None

### **Honorable Mention**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
  - Entry Title: January 27, 2023
  - Entry Credit: Marty Blader
  - Judge Comment: None
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## **BEST HEADLINE**

### **First Place**

- Contestant Name: Glenbard West High School
- Entry Title: Highlights from a Night of 'Gilded Glamour': Met Gala Outfits 2022: Bop or Flop?
- Entry Credit: Hamid Ali
- Judge Comment: I wasn't sure at first what 'bop' meant but it became clear pretty quickly. Good use of short, fun words (bop and flop) to keep readers informed and entertained.

### **Second Place**

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
- Entry Title: When detentions don't work: For some chronically truant students, detention never ends
- Entry Credit: Nathan Yuan
- Judge Comment: Intriguing headline that made me want to read more.

### **Third Place**

- Contestant Name: Palatine High School
- Entry Title: Palatine theater brings The Blithe Spirit back to life

- Entry Credit: Abby Ortiz
- Judge Comment: Good, straightforward headline. Readers immediately know that a play is going to be held.

### **Honorable Mention**

- Contestant Name: Palatine High School
- Entry Title: Getting red in the face at Palatine High School
- Entry Credit: Lindsey Lussow
- Judge Comment: Creative headline; with no deck (subheadline), the graphic about embarrassing moments helped.

### **Honorable Mention**

- Contestant Name: Glenbard West High School
- Entry Title: 2022's Summer Blockbusters: 'The Good, The Bad and The Ugly'
- Entry Credit: Sam Schoettle
- Judge Comment: Good reference to a classic movie to let readers know where the story was presumably headed.

### **Competition Comment**

Good amount of creative headlines here.

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## **BEST HUMOROUS COMMENTARY**

### **First Place**

- Contestant Name: Niles West High School
- Entry Title: Opinion: Give Me a New Chromebook
- Entry Credit: Ella Lindemann
- Judge Comment: This is a well-written, humorous look at the notion of "senior privilege" and the grade-to-grade pecking order of high school life.

### **Second Place**

- Contestant Name: Edwardsville High School
- Entry Title: In Light of Spotify's Plan to Increase Subscription Costs: a Comprehensive Review of its most Annoying ads
- Entry Credit: Caspar Dowdy
- Judge Comment: This is a humorously scathing review of advertising spots on a popular music streaming app. Nicely written.

### **Third Place**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: Highlighting my past as true 'neon kid'
- Entry Credit: Luke Willer

- Judge Comment: This is an amusing reflection on the writer's childhood obsession with garishly colored clothes. Very relatable.
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## **BEST ILLUSTRATION**

### **First Place**

- Contestant Name: Glenbard West High School
- Entry Title: ChatGPT: Menace or Tool?
- Entry Credit: Heide Brazier
- Judge Comment: None

### **Second Place**

- Contestant Name: Palatine High School
- Entry Title: Are high school students overworked?
- Entry Credit: Allison Ramirez
- Judge Comment: None

### **Third Place**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: Cutline: Social anxiety may cause one to have overwhelming thought doubt and anxiety, caused by a social interaction.
- Entry Credit: Anika Brown
- Judge Comment: None

### **Competition Comment**

Generally, the artistic skill displayed in these illustrations is quite good. However, several entrants limited the judge's ability to rate their work when they failed to submit the story accompanying the artwork or a page showing the two. Note the IJEA guidelines: "The illustration should serve as the article's dominant visual element." Without the story, how does the judge know if the illustration is the dominant element?

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## **BEST IN-DEPTH NEW STORY**

### **First Place**

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
- Entry Title: D203 Board narrowly approves sweeping changes to high school music program
- Entry Credit: Jake Pfeiffer
- Judge Comment: Good overall report. Good selection of sources including Board Members and students.

### **Second Place**

- Contestant Name: Niles West High School
- Entry Title: Antisemitism on the Rise Nationally and in District 219
- Entry Credit: Anna Lusson
- Judge Comment: Generally good report. Citations about Niles North help. Comments from district administration and groups like ADL would help.

### **Third Place**

- Contestant Name: Palatine High School
- Entry Title: El Departamento de EL
- Entry Credit: Steven Keferlis
- Judge Comment: Good job telling student story. More specific statistics would help rather than say "Some students" or "Many students." Comments from non Latino students would help.

### **Honorable Mention**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: Thrifting rises through social media, prompted by fashion cycles
- Entry Credit: Anjali Kota
- Judge Comment: Good topic. More sources, especially from thrift store personnel and non-profit organizations besides Goodwill would help.

### **Competition Comment**

Winners generally covered their topics well. Strong and varied sources are essential for a good in-depth story as is attribution of information.

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## **BEST INFOGRAPHIC**

### **First Place**

- Contestant Name: Glenbard West High School
- Entry Title: Siblings & School: What does your order in the family say about your relationship with academics?
- Entry Credit: Maariya Quadri
- Judge Comment: Visually interesting and neatly organized infographic. Color scheme is subdued for a more mature look. The first and last pieces of data ("211 students..." and "128 students...") would be better presented as a percentage rather than absolute number for ease of understanding the data.

### **Second Place**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: Concert culture changes after Covid-19
- Entry Credit: Abigail Culcasi

- Judge Comment: Very clever to use the ticket as the basis for the infographic! I think that eliminating the seat location, price, etc would clean up the graphic and make it easier to see the data being presented while still maintaining the look and feel of a concert ticket.

### **Third Place**

- Contestant Name: Palatine High School
  - Entry Title: El Department de EL
  - Entry Credit: Steven Keferlis
  - Judge Comment: This infographic is beautifully illustrated and I am drawn to the colors and shapes! However, the text is so small that I need to zoom in incredibly far just to read it - making text inside the circles would be a big improvement (eliminating the repetitive "Level X students..." in each circle would provide more room to make the text larger).
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## **BEST MULTIMEDIA STORY PACKAGE**

### **First Place**

- Contestant Name: Glenbard West High School
- Entry Title: Securing the Castle: A Look into Security at West
- Entry Credit: Ethan Parab, Katherine Schlueter
- Judge Comment: Very timely and well done story and video.

### **Second Place**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: World Language Week celebrates diversity among student body
- Entry Credit: Emma Fudacz, Abigail Culcasi
- Judge Comment: Great video and presentation.

### **Third Place**

- Contestant Name: Palatine High School
- Entry Title: PHS Drumline drums up student hype
- Entry Credit: Hala Habahbeh
- Judge Comment: Well written story and a fun video to match.

### **Honorable Mention**

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
- Entry Title: 'Red and White Night' kicks off school year
- Entry Credit: Jake Pfeiffer, Kait McHale, Yashvi Sanam
- Judge Comment: Great photo gallery!

### **Honorable Mention**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: Thrifting rises through social media, prompted by fashion cycles

- Entry Credit: Anjali Kota, Taylor Neal
  - Judge Comment: Great use of video and other forms of media.
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## **BEST NEWS OR FEATURE PHOTO**

### **First Place**

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
- Entry Title: Dynasty step team
- Entry Credit: D'Niya Little-Segers
- Judge Comment: Excellent composition, exposure, and focus. Well done!

### **Second Place**

- Contestant Name: Niles West High School
- Entry Title: SIRs Under The Microscope (Photo 1 in gallery, "Mustafa Aldiraji, senior, measures the zone of inhibition of E.Coli in petri dishes.")
- Entry Credit: Mia Sarris
- Judge Comment: Great close up showing the concentration involved with the work.

### **Third Place**

- Contestant Name: Glenbard West High School
- Entry Title: Glenbard West Book Club - What is it?
- Entry Credit: Francesca Di Domenico
- Judge Comment: Good use of the frame. Nice tight shot.

### **Honorable Mention**

- Contestant Name: Edwardsville High School
- Entry Title: AP, Honors Biology Students Test Their Skills
- Entry Credit: Chase Golem
- Judge Comment: Really like the lighting and intensity of the work.

### **Honorable Mention**

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
  - Entry Title: fire alarm
  - Entry Credit: Jay Deegan
  - Judge Comment: Good action news photo!
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## **BEST NEWS STORY**

### **First Place**

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
- Entry Title: Naperville Central implements new grading pilot for 2022-23 year
- Entry Credit: Jeremy Zhao

- Judge Comment: Great job on this article. You got all the critical information about the change in high up in the story so the reader knows how it will affect them. Next time, try to put a list of names so high up in the story. It disrupts your narrative flow and storytelling.

### **Second Place**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: Downers Grove Public Library cancels Drag Queen Bingo over violent threats
- Entry Credit: Emma Fudacz
- Judge Comment: Good work here! You made the issue relevant to your audience and covered an issue that they care about. Next time, start your story with the news, not with background information.

### **Third Place**

- Contestant Name: Niles West High School
- Entry Title: Wild Turkey Finds a Home at Niles West
- Entry Credit: Sophia Lannoye
- Judge Comment: Nice work here reporting the neighborhood nuisance! Next time, consider trying an anecdotal lead for a story that has local color.

### **Honorable Mention**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
  - Entry Title: District 66 students affected by budget cuts as community prepares to vote on referendum in Nov. 8 midterm election
  - Entry Credit: Catherine Hewawissa, Juliana Conyer
  - Judge Comment: Referendum stories can be hard to write but you did a good job of getting important information across to your reader. Next time, try to tell the reader even earlier in the story why/how this issue directly affects them.
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## **BEST OVERALL DESIGN**

### **First Place**

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
- Entry Title: Central Times Oct. 24, 2022
- Entry Credit: Central Times Staff, Jeremy Zhao
- Judge Comment: Distinct flag, dominant cover image. Modular design achieved on all pages. Screens on pp. 2-3 create visual interest. Liberal use of hairlines help separate page elements. Waffles v. Pancakes composite is eye-catching (and silly) fun. Body copy is generally clean, with few widows, orphans or bad text breaks.

### **Second Place**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: Dec. 9, 2022

- Entry Credit: Catherine Hewawissa, Hamzah Sayyed, Megan Fox, Hugo Pletcher, Lauren Miranda, Isabella Shin, Allison Scherquist, Owen Chaidez, Marty Blader, Khita Cunningham, Abigail Culcasi, Ava Lafin, Emma Fudacz
  - Judge Comment: Dominant photo, eye-catching bottom rail on p. 1. Modular design achieved on all pages. Body copy is generally clean, with few widows, orphans or bad text breaks.
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## **BEST PERSONALITY PROFILE**

### **First Place**

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
- Entry Title: Central band director plays Lollapalooza, Madison Square Garden
- Entry Credit: Claire Yung
- Judge Comment: This is a beautiful, energetic piece of writing that speaks directly to its audience. It's high in newsworthiness, and the reporter has a terrific ear for quotes. The one critique I would give is a few summarized or paraphrased stories would add depth. But overall, this is superb.

### **Second Place**

- Contestant Name: Palatine High School
- Entry Title: NHS Senior of the Month: Billy Panos
- Entry Credit: Hala Hababbeh
- Judge Comment: This is a fun story with great scenes and quotes and a sense of school competition and intrigue. I would love to know a bit more about Panos and why he was chosen.

### **Third Place**

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
- Entry Title: Central senior recognized as ILMEA All-State Pianist
- Entry Credit: Ziad El Bego
- Judge Comment: This is strong, but would benefit from anecdotes and description, including in the opening. The quotes are very good. It would be great to see him playing in a scene and to get quotations from Stack.

### **Competition Comment**

Thank you for the chance to read these inspiring stories.

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## **BEST PHOTO GALLERY/SLIDESHOW**

### **First Place**

- Contestant Name: Niles West High School
- Entry Title: Arts Appreciation Presents: Something Like Frozen

- Entry Credit: Evelyn Herbert
- Judge Comment: Wow, this was a really effective use of photos to tell a story in the most compelling way. Great compositional choices. Really outstanding and memorable work!

### **Second Place**

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
- Entry Title: 'Red and White Night' kicks off school year
- Entry Credit: Jake Pfeiffer, Kait McHale, Yashvi Sanam
- Judge Comment: Love the variety of activities highlighted here. Great combination of images and words to tell the story. The action shots are first rate. Excellent work!

### **Third Place**

- Contestant Name: Niles West High School
- Entry Title: Niles West Homecoming Football Game
- Entry Credit: Katarina Pljevaljcic
- Judge Comment: Really good visual storytelling once again. This would have placed higher with more action shots from the game. But still, this is really well done!

### **Honorable Mention**

- Contestant Name: Palatine High School
- Entry Title: Dance Show Preview
- Entry Credit: Siomara Valdez, Gabriella Bova
- Judge Comment: Terrific photos. Love the compositional choices. Very good visual storytelling!

### **Honorable Mention**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: Spirit Assembly comes charging back with new activities and contests
- Entry Credit: Khita Cunningham
- Judge Comment: This is an excellent use of photos in tandem with brief text to tell a story. Love the low angles in many of the action photos. The gallery does a great job of putting us in the midst of what seems to be a really fun event!

### **Competition Comment**

All of the competitors in Division 4 understood how to do visual storytelling. It was a delight to judge this division!

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## **BEST PHOTO STORY**

### **First Place**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: D99 Hoops extravaganza adds fun for team before state run
- Entry Credit: Khita Cunningham

- Judge Comment: A nice mix of images capturing the spirit of the event well.

### **Second Place**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
  - Entry Title: Mustang photo finish: Girls dive and splash through 2022 season
  - Entry Credit: TeKavin Russell
  - Judge Comment: Also a nice collection of images. Maybe one too many?)
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## **BEST REVIEW**

### **First Place**

- Contestant Name: Edwardsville High School
- Entry Title: The 1975 goes back to their Roots with Newest Album "Being Funny in a Foreign Language"
- Entry Credit: Annisyn Krebs-Carr
- Judge Comment: A beautifully written analysis of The 1975's new album with a lovely opening paragraph that connects with the reader's own nostalgia.

### **Second Place**

- Contestant Name: Palatine High School
- Entry Title: Spider-Man: No Way Home extended edition
- Entry Credit: Anika Tsau, Tanya Gerdzhev
- Judge Comment: A meticulous and effective breakdown of why the extended cut of "Spider-Man: No Way Home" is only a must-see for die-hard fans.

### **Third Place**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: Little Simz takes a victory lap with 'NO THANK YOU'
- Entry Credit: Hugo Pletcher
- Judge Comment: The new album by Little Simz is done full justice in this track-by-track look at what makes her artistry so special.

### **Honorable Mention**

- Contestant Name: Glenbard West High School
- Entry Title: Prey: A Dying Movie Franchises' Redemption
- Entry Credit: Will Lafontaine
- Judge Comment: A thoughtful account of how "Prey" breathed new life into a tired action franchise.

### **Honorable Mention**

- Contestant Name: Glenbard West High School
- Entry Title: 2022's Summer Blockbusters: 'The Good, The Bad And The Ugly'
- Entry Credit: Sam Schoettle

- Judge Comment: An enjoyable overview of summer blockbusters that is most effective at explaining why films like the new "Jurassic World" are so dull.

### **Competition Comment**

Though some of these submissions read more like blog entries bereft of necessary context, the writing and impassioned insights continue to impress me.

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## **BEST SERIOUS COMMENTARY**

### **First Place**

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
- Entry Title: Column: Antisemite Kanye West needs a conservatorship
- Entry Credit: Javen Oswald
- Judge Comment: Gives valid evidence to support the necessity of his topic, documents the result of the subject's actions, localizes the effect of those actions, gives sources for finding proof of the inaccuracy of the subject's statements. well written.

### **Second Place**

- Contestant Name: Edwardsville High School
- Entry Title: Drag queens should be able to read children's books to kids. Get over it.
- Entry Credit: Maddox Karnes
- Judge Comment: another well-written editorial. Hook gives socially accepted examples of arguments for the proposal, gives pertinent evidence to support the necessity of the thesis, shows local significance of the topic, uses relevant and informative quotes and examples.

### **Third Place**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: No, I'm not changing my name – learn how to pronounce it
- Entry Credit: Tia Ramahi
- Judge Comment: well written, pertinent topic for diversity issues.

### **Honorable Mention**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: Hollywood needs to cast more disabled actors
- Entry Credit: Owen Chaidez
- Judge Comment: logical organization, pertinent facts well-documented facts.

### **Honorable Mention**

- Contestant Name: Niles West High School
- Entry Title: Niles West Should Have a Lacrosse Team
- Entry Credit: Sophia Lannoye

- Judge Comment: clear point of view, clear explanation of the sport, valid reasoning, and informative.

### **Competition Comment**

This group had many well written, relevant, well researched editorials. Please note that the rules state "The opinion should be logically argued and supported by ATTRIBUTED facts"

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## **BEST SINGLE-PAGE STORY PACKAGE**

### **First Place**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: Students and staff react to new hybrid block schedule
- Entry Credit: Hamzah Sayyed, Catherine Hewawissa
- Judge Comment: Nice lead photo conveys the angle of the story. (If set up, this should ethically be called a "photo illustration.") Good writing and reporting.

### **Second Place**

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
- Entry Title: Dean of Student Activities retirement, editorial, replacement named
- Entry Credit: Jeremy Zhao, Nathan Yuan, Central Times Staff
- Judge Comment: Very nice package with good variety and visuals. However, inclusion of bottom story causes package to "dogleg" and not be truly modular. This would have been an easy fix. As it is, it looks like the story goes with the rest of the package.

### **Third Place**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
  - Entry Title: January 27, 2023
  - Entry Credit: Catherine Hewawissa
  - Judge Comment: Interesting infographic that might surprise some readers. Good photos but too many and too small.
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## **BEST SPORTS COMMENTARY**

### **First Place**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: Marty's Musings: Why cheerleading should cheer for girls' basketball
- Entry Credit: Marty Blader
- Judge Comment: A very good opinion piece taking a position, arguing its merits and offering solutions.

### **Second Place**

- Contestant Name: Palatine High School

- Entry Title: Are Ryan Poles and the Chicago Bears headed in the right direction?
- Entry Credit: Shawn Adler
- Judge Comment: A good opinion piece noting the Bears' off-field moves and commenting on their merits.

### **Third Place**

- Contestant Name: Edwardsville High School
- Entry Title: Don't Separate the Act from the Athlete
- Entry Credit: Jalen Flowers
- Judge Comment: A nice opinion piece pointing out the hypocrisy when star athletes misbehave away from the game and fans and teams look the other way.

### **Honorable Mention**

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
- Entry Title: Column: A Unionization Proclamation
- Entry Credit: Jake Pfeiffer
- Judge Comment: The writer notes a wrong in the treatment of minor league baseball players and offers ideas to improve the situation.

### **Honorable Mention**

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
  - Entry Title: Column: FIFA Failings
  - Entry Credit: Jake Pfeiffer
  - Judge Comment: A nice recap of the corruption surrounding the World Cup. I like the economic figures and attribution.
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## **BEST SPORTS FEATURE STORY**

### **First Place**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: Superstitious athletes use routines to be successful in their sport
- Entry Credit: Maya Homberg
- Judge Comment: Good topic. Lead would have been better using one of your own athletes. Maybe a little more perspective? Good personal stories.

### **Second Place**

- Contestant Name: Glenbard West High School
- Entry Title: A Look Into Girls Track and Title IX
- Entry Credit: Blake Noble
- Judge Comment: Great topic. In many ways, this read like a report. Paragraphs are too long. Quotes need their own graphs ... and stick to SAID. But nice stories and interviews.

**Third Place**

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
- Entry Title: Andy Nussbaum celebrates his 700th win as head coach of Central girls basketball
- Entry Credit: Nolan Shen
- Judge Comment: Nice way to acknowledge the accomplishment. Maybe a bit more about the coach himself? His background? Family? Nice job.

**Honorable Mention**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: Senior foreign exchange student 'serves' up success this tennis season
- Entry Credit: Catherine Hewawissa
- Judge Comment: Nice feature Good interviews and it's clear she had a good experience with her team.

**Competition Comment**

Nice job, everyone. Always remember to ask more questions and get more background to provide history and perspective!

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**BEST SPORTS NEWS STORY****First Place**

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
- Entry Title: Boys golf off to 'best start in history'
- Entry Credit: Jake Pfeiffer
- Judge Comment: With the headline, it would've been nice to see how this year's team stacked up to starts from previous years and why this season's start was the best in the program's history. Great job highlighting the importance of having depth on a team through insightful quotes from coach and players and background.

**Second Place**

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
- Entry Title: Boys soccer wins first state championship
- Entry Credit: Jay Deegan
- Judge Comment: Lead could've been stronger. Great job intertwining player thoughts on the championship game with an overall analysis of the team's season performance.

**Third Place**

- Contestant Name: Glenbard West High School
- Entry Title: Varsity Football ends September with a 5-1 Record
- Entry Credit: Evan Varlas

- Judge Comment: A quote from a third player would help diversify the piece a bit more. Very good detail regarding the team's running game and how Ellens and the offensive line worked together to establish a good running game after Pope was injured.

### **Honorable Mention**

- Contestant Name: Niles West High School
- Entry Title: Boys Basketball Honors CSL Champions
- Entry Credit: Khadija Khan
- Judge Comment: There are some grammatical errors that disrupt the overall flow, but a great job of using the history of the CSL championship-winning team as a motivating factor for the current team to perform well with former players watching on.

### **Competition Comment**

Many diverse approaches to covering a game, athlete or overall team performance. I learned something new from each article.

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## **BEST SPORTS PHOTO**

### **First Place**

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
- Entry Title: Central soccer: Chase Adams
- Entry Credit: Jimmy Dalton
- Judge Comment: Love the thrill that this photo communicates! A celebratory moment!!

### **Second Place**

- Contestant Name: Niles West High School
- Entry Title: Niles West Homecoming Football Game: Seniors cheer as Wolves make a down.
- Entry Credit: Katarina Pljevaljic
- Judge Comment: The enthusiasm is palpable! Well done!!

### **Third Place**

- Contestant Name: Palatine High School
- Entry Title: Red Ryders storm spirit into football student sections
- Entry Credit: Sofia Klein
- Judge Comment: Another great shot of enthusiastic fans!

### **Honorable Mention**

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
- Entry Title: Central golfer Aiden Schulz
- Entry Credit: Jake Pfeiffer
- Judge Comment: Nice shot showing form and the rather solitary nature of the game. Beautiful lighting.

### **Honorable Mention**

- Contestant Name: Niles West High School
  - Entry Title: Niles West marching band counts down seconds until half time show.
  - Entry Credit: Katarina Pljevaljic
  - Judge Comment: Good, tight shot. Really like the repetition depicted in the composition.
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## **BEST STAFF EDITORIAL**

### **First Place**

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
- Entry Title: Editorial: Learning is more than memorization. Finals should reflect that
- Entry Credit: Central Times Editorial Board
- Judge Comment: Great job with this! Keep it up writing about student specific issues.

### **Second Place**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: Editorial: We need a consistent schedule now
- Entry Credit: Megan Fox
- Judge Comment: Nice job! Keep focusing on issues that impact students and pushing administrators to do more.

### **Third Place**

- Contestant Name: Edwardsville High School
- Entry Title: Don't Ruin it for Everyone Else
- Entry Credit: Caspar Dowdy, Maddox Karnes, Natalie Becker, Chase Golem, Jalen Flowers, Pera Onal, Maggie Terry, Destiny Albrecht, Kody Moore, Annisyn Krebs-Carr
- Judge Comment: Good job! Keep up the focus on issues students are talking about or about things that happen at your school.

### **Honorable Mention**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: Editorial: Encouragement is the key to the absence issues
- Entry Credit: Anjali Kota
- Judge Comment: Great work! Don't be afraid to get a bit more specific and offer up more solutions in the future.

### **Honorable Mention**

- Contestant Name: Edwardsville High School
- Entry Title: Our Courts Don't Represent Us
- Entry Credit: Caspar Dowdy, Tyler Chrenka, Simon McKean, Rachel Piazza, Lindsey Lankford, Logan Roeber, Jaelyn Hudson, Grace McGinness

- Judge Comment: Great topic! Be sure to relate it back a bit more closely to students in the future if possible.

### **Competition Comment**

Strong category with interesting topics! Not as student specific as some other entries, but still very strong

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## **BEST USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

### **First Place**

- Contestant Name: Niles West High School
- Entry Title: TikTok @nileswestnews
- Entry Credit: Katarina Pljevaljic
- Judge Comment: None

### **Second Place**

- Contestant Name: Palatine High School
- Entry Title: Palatine Twitter
- Entry Credit: Monika Jurevicius
- Judge Comment: None

### **Third Place**

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
- Entry Title: Central Times Twitter
- Entry Credit: Central Times Staff
- Judge Comment: None

### **Honorable Mention**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: Instagram @downerssouthblueprint
- Entry Credit: Amanda Despres
- Judge Comment: None

### **Honorable Mention**

- Contestant Name: Niles West High School
  - Entry Title: Instagram @nileswestnews
  - Entry Credit: Katarina Pljevaljic
  - Judge Comment: None
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## **BEST VIDEO STORY**

### **First Place**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: Color: A Secret World
- Entry Credit: Jo Stewart
- Judge Comment: interesting piece. Why the old record scratching noise at the beginning? need to edit tighter--too long. good cut aways during the interviews; watch framing of shots, use rule of thirds--awkward framing on second shot of art teacher--lots of room behind her; good interdisciplinary approach to topic.

### **Second Place**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: Teen Tok
- Entry Credit: Lauren Miranda
- Judge Comment: interesting topic. good use of videos on side. I would not include or interview someone you have made TikTok videos with--tarnishes the piece. Too long. Need to edit tighter to maintain focus.

### **Third Place**

- Contestant Name: Palatine High School
- Entry Title: PHS applied tech gets national attention
- Entry Credit: Ishika Mishra
- Judge Comment: interesting subject. Never start video with standup--that says you are the most compelling part of the video. Start with video and do a VO. Don't include "state your name and title." That is for you to use when creating the CG, not for broadcast. Need more cutaways. Awkward framing of shots. Remember the rule of thirds. Too long. Need to tighten up editing to maintain focus. Don't ask two-part questions. Actually, we shouldn't hear you ask questions, but you should script your vo to lead into the soundbite — research and find "setting up soundbite" article. Avoid jump cuts. Watch vocalized encourages.

### **Competition Comment**

Good stories relevant to students. Needed to edit tighter. Entries were too long. Need to be crisp in writing and let the video help tell the story. . Entries were fun to view. Keep up the good work. Watch professionals and critique evening news to help hone your craft.

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## **BEST WEBSITE**

### **First Place**

- Contestant Name: Downers Grove South High School
- Entry Title: southblueprint.com
- Entry Credit: Ava Lafin, Emma Fudacz, Abigail Culcasi
- Judge Comment: First off, I love that logo! There is so much that is so well done on your site; the photos are all super high quality and you have consistent updates and a wide variety of content. I love the cartoons and the author headshots. If I could make a

suggestion, I would recommend that you filter in the multimedia content with the rest of the content on the site. So if a video has more of a news lean, you'd put it in a news section instead of multimedia. Since websites allow us to do so much more than print does, I don't think it's all that necessary to separate the two out, and I think it would help keep the site a bit more organized in the future and ensure readers aren't overwhelmed with their options. Other than that though, excellent work!

### **Second Place**

- Contestant Name: Niles West High School
- Entry Title: The Niles West News
- Entry Credit: Ella Lindemann, Emma Schieffer
- Judge Comment: You have lots of podcasts with regular uploads, which is so cool and is something I'm sure your readers appreciate. I love the diversity of content and how all of the photos are super high quality. And the galleries are so cool!! If I could make a suggestion, I would recommend integrating the content under the category "packages" into the other content categories on the site like features or news. I'm not sure how many people would know what exactly a package was and would click on it. And I would also suggest doing more of those because they're super cool! But other than that, excellent work!

### **Third Place**

- Contestant Name: Naperville Central High School
  - Entry Title: Central Times
  - Entry Credit: Claire Yung, Jeremy Zhao, Nathan Yuan, Central Times Staff
  - Judge Comment: I love how there's a wide variety of interesting content to choose from. Your header images on articles are very high quality and drew me into the stories. I love the letter to the editor button on top! I like the sidebars with the twitter feed and latest stories; it makes use of the whole webpage without making things feel overwhelming or claustrophobic. If I could make one suggestion, it would be to more consistently upload multimedia content. I know sometimes it can be tough to get stories/content like that done because of all the extra effort it requires, but I think, when you can do it, it goes a long way and gives your readers something extra that they wouldn't be able to get from just picking up the print issue. Other than that, great work!
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