

## 2025 IJEAN NEWSPAPER & DIGITAL NEWS MEDIA CONTEST

### DIVISION 5 INDIVIDUAL WINNERS — Enrollment 2,550 and above

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#### BEST ADVERTISEMENT

**Place Name:** First Place

**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School

**Entry Title:** Lumos Club

**Entry Credit:** Daryna Brodyk

**Judge Comment:** Nice layout. All of the essential info is present. Love the humor (“Looks great [on] college applications”). The main image could be improved, though. A photo of club members would be more interesting than the artwork currently featured. Nevertheless, impressive work!

**Place Name:** Second Place

**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School

**Entry Title:** Cure Club

**Entry Credit:** Anne Sullivan Beltran

**Judge Comment:** Excellent design — simple and clean. Very informative. Good use of QR code. A main image (other than the QR code) would definitely strengthen the visual appeal of this ad. Overall, though, very solid!

**Competition Comment:** See judge comments.

#### BEST ALTERNATIVE STORYTELLING

**Place Name:** First Place

**Contestant Name:** Downers Grove South High School

**Entry Title:** Talent Show

**Entry Credit:** Ren Espinoza, Sebastian Blanco, Yoldi Villa, Kate Dziewinski, Sophia Lodhi, Adrian Herres, Liam Wells, Mikella Majchrzak

**Judge Comment:** Great job! My only suggestion would be to increase the font on the statements from each person.

**Place Name:** Second Place

**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School

**Entry Title:** A striking start to the season

**Entry Credit:** Bailey Baker

**Judge Comment:** Great way to liven up a QA.

**Place Name:** Third Place  
**Contestant Name:** Downers Grove South High School  
**Entry Title:** Capturing life through film  
**Entry Credit:** Dylan Mora  
**Judge Comment:** Great way to share your passion, and insights. Well done.

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention  
**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School  
**Entry Title:** What does being bilingual mean to you?  
**Entry Credit:** Molly Tomczyk, Maia Weissman  
**Judge Comment:** Really complements the whole package well.

**Competition Comment:** See judge comments.

## BEST AUDIO JOURNALISM

**Place Name:** First Place  
**Contestant Name:** Downers Grove South High School  
**Entry Title:** Breaking Barriers: Young Women in Stem  
**Entry Credit:** Joy Haddleton  
**Judge Comment:** Strong open, well written. Above-average delivery. Solid reporting. Good cuts. Volume is low; work on post-production audio.

**Place Name:** Second Place  
**Contestant Name:** Downers Grove South High School  
**Entry Title:** Romantics  
**Entry Credit:** Juliana Conyer  
**Judge Comment:** Good delivery. More commentary than journalism. "Genre" mispronounced in places. Choppy audio editing.

**Place Name:** Third Place  
**Contestant Name:** New Trier High School  
**Entry Title:** Football Recap: NT loses to Evanston, falls to 1-5  
**Entry Credit:** Michael Batson  
**Judge Comment:** Low energy delivery. (Try listening back to this at 1.5 or 2x; that would be a more natural, more energetic delivery speed.) Good writing. Audio could have been trimmed to eliminate redundancy with script.

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention  
**Contestant Name:** New Trier High School  
**Entry Title:** Trevian Sports Spotlight, Ep. 1: Inside look at NT boys basketball preseason  
**Entry Credit:** Lauren Sullivan, Lillian Long  
**Judge Comment:** More of an interview than reporting/journalism. Awkward reading at the

open could've been addressed in editing. Show gets off to a slow start with "thank you"s. Work more to make questions short and to the point—and keep the focus on interviewees.

**Competition Comment:** Solid entries; all candidates show promise as broadcasters/podcasters!

## BEST CENTERSPREAD STORY PACKAGE

**Place Name:** First Place

**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School

**Entry Title:** Tied together: students build connections

**Entry Credit:** Molly Tomczyk, Amani Saudye

**Judge Comment:** The topic for the spread shows good news sense in spotting a sharp story about students. Beware of screening text.

**Place Name:** Second Place

**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School

**Entry Title:** Breaking the language barrier

**Entry Credit:** Molly Tomczyk, Maia Weissman

**Judge Comment:** The spread gives students a sense of who they are -- and how diverse they are. Again, beware of screening the text.

**Place Name:** Third Place

**Contestant Name:** Stevenson High School

**Entry Title:** Under the Weather

**Entry Credit:** Eshaam Bhattad, Saatvik Kailash

**Judge Comment:** The reporting is sharp on a serious news story that affects students. Did you do a staff editorial on this? Beware of knocking out the text -- hard to read.

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention

**Contestant Name:** Downers Grove South High School

**Entry Title:** Issue 5: Talent Show

**Entry Credit:** Liam Wells, Adrian Herres, Mikella Majchrzak, Ren Espinoza, Sebastian Blanco, Kate Dziewinski, Yoldi Villa, Sophia Lodhi

**Judge Comment:** Covering students makes the best focus for a spread, and the talent show sound like a major event at the school. Try to get verbs in headlines.

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention

**Contestant Name:** Stevenson High School

**Entry Title:** Painting Patriots

**Entry Credit:** Eshaam Bhattad, Ishanvi Chaudhary

**Judge Comment:** Coverage of art by students makes a good feature spread. Again. beware of knocking out the text.

**Competition Comment:** Although not all entries fit the exact criteria of a spread, all showed a focus on local coverage and some good reporting as well a sharp news sense. Beware of screening and knocking out text. Readability is the main goal of design.

## BEST EDITORIAL CARTOON

**Place Name:** First Place

**Contestant Name:** Downers Grove South High School

**Entry Title:** Citizens must take environmental action when leaders won't

**Entry Credit:** Ren Espinoza

**Judge Comment:** Nicely done. The cartoon shows a clear point of view and augments the editorial.

**Competition Comment:** Aside from the winning entry, all others did not meet the criteria for an editorial cartoon, that being, as stated, "A cartoon that expresses an opinion about a subject of relevance to the publication's audience" and that an editorial cartoon "should not simply be an illustration that goes along with a news or feature article."

## BEST FEATURE STORY

**Place Name:** First Place

**Contestant Name:** New Trier High School

**Entry Title:** Strong brotherhood brings hope for revival of discontinued Menz Dance program

**Entry Credit:** Margy Burgoon

**Judge Comment:** An absolute delight to read. This group has a special place at your school, and you did a wonderful job of letting the voices of the teachers, parents, students and alums tell that story. Full of history, description and genuine information. All my questions were answered and I could visualize this group, its members and its legacy at your school. Nice job.

**Place Name:** Second Place

**Contestant Name:** Stevenson High School

**Entry Title:** Unethical Stevenson

**Entry Credit:** Tej Kosaraju, Sreeja Muthukannan, Jenny Liang

**Judge Comment:** Wow. Thorough look at a prevalent issue for your students and teachers. Good primary and secondary sources, tell the local story and bring it into a wider context. Good interviews and story flow, especially important with so much information. Maybe finish by coming back to your opening student, Mahmud Jayanta, and how he did on the test, or something, for a frame. Nice job.

**Place Name:** Third Place

**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School

**Entry Title:** Breaking Gender Molds: Exploring gender inequality in classes

**Entry Credit:** Sofia Cole, Molly Tomczyk, Maia Weissman

**Judge Comment:** Really good topic, sources and interviews to provide a wide look at these courses in your school and how students feel when they are in the minority based on gender. Well done.

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention

**Contestant Name:** Huntley High School

**Entry Title:** From Orange Ribbons to Remission

**Entry Credit:** Irene Banerjee

**Judge Comment:** Beautifully framed story. You told Madison's journey with tone appropriate phrasing and excellent story flow. Glad you talked to several family members for their insight. Nice job.

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention

**Contestant Name:** New Trier High School

**Entry Title:** Sherman Booth and a retrospective look at race on the North Shore

**Entry Credit:** Brendan Fijol, David Rhee

**Judge Comment:** Everything a good feature should be. Researched. Relevant. Contextual. Interesting. A genuine story. This one showcases history and its impact to your community.

**Competition Comment:** See judge comments.

## BEST FRONT-PAGE DESIGN

**Place Name:** First Place

**Contestant Name:** Stevenson High School

**Entry Title:** Alice's Evidence

**Entry Credit:** Fiona Jin

**Judge Comment:** Pretty psychedelic feel to this page 1, and I'm sure that was the intent. The graphic itself is a formidable size, appropriate for the topic. The reference to the story -- "Desensitized to the drill" and the copy that follows -- could be a larger type size to capture the eye as it moves down the page. Thoughtful approach to a difficult subject.

**Place Name:** Second Place

**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School

**Entry Title:** The Oracle page 1 - VOLUME LXVII, Issue 5, March 22, 2024

**Entry Credit:** Mia Carr, Gaby Yap

**Judge Comment:** Interesting use of color and outlines of students to highlight the prevalence of students sitting alone at lunchtime. The index to stories inside (with photos)

might have been better placed horizontally along the bottom, to avoid distracting from the key editorial/art package.

**Place Name:** Third Place

**Contestant Name:** New Trier High School

**Entry Title:** New Trier News December Issue Front Page

**Entry Credit:** Neil Sanderson

**Judge Comment:** Traditional but highly attractive page 1, with a good dominant photo and appropriately sized non-dominant photo anchoring the bottom part of the page. I like the index with photos along the bottom. Nice type choices.

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention

**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School

**Entry Title:** The Oracle Page 1 - Volume LXV Issue 4, February 14, 2025

**Entry Credit:** Sofia Cole, Kaitlyn Jiang, Sarah Park

**Judge Comment:** Good, dominant artwork here as part of the “1st.” Good issue to tackle, although the story fails to mention Illinois’ New Voices Act, which specifically addresses prior restraint.

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention

**Contestant Name:** Downers Grove South High School

**Entry Title:** Issue 5: Page 1

**Entry Credit:** Yoldi Villa

**Judge Comment:** Nice, newsy front page, with the blue in the index at right playing off the prevalence of blue in uniforms. Good dominant photo with lead story; nice size on secondary story.

**Competition Comment:** The remaining entries were outstanding and would have received recognition if we weren’t limited to two honorable mentions. “Decision 2024”: Excellent illustration, but information about the specific content inside would be welcome (teasers or brief listing of contents with page numbers). “School security adapts to national violence”: Fine job with a traditional newspaper front page, but let’s create more hierarchy by making the lead photo and lead headline clearly dominant. “Woven Into History”: Amazing image, very powerful design! Hard to improve on this; the rest of the competition is just really strong this year.

## BEST HEADLINE

**Place Name:** First Place

**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School

**Entry Title:** Math Team adds value: Club allows infinite learning, connection

**Entry Credit:** Molly Tomczyk

**Judge Comment:** Nicely done effectively implementing math terms into the headline,

including a strong verb that fits the overall tone/theme of the story. And the fact that you have students commenting about their enjoyment of the experience of the math team carries the meaning of the headline through the entire story. Great job!

**Place Name:** Second Place

**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School

**Entry Title:** The Cage of Comparison: FOMO instills anxiety, leads to loss of individuality

**Entry Credit:** Zoha Suteria

**Judge Comment:** In addition to the alliteration within the main headline, the use of "FOMO" is an attention-getting start to the subhead that keeps the reader moving through the entire headline. The complete alliteration and assonance contained in the complete head and subhead is creative and not excessive, especially given the tone of the first-person writing.

**Place Name:** Third Place

**Contestant Name:** Downers Grove South High School

**Entry Title:** Lainey Wilson blows audiences away with 'Whirlwind'

**Entry Credit:** Juliana Conyer

**Judge Comment:** Great choice of verbs to make the connection to the title of the album and effectively communicate the review. The headline also effectively sets up the written piece's use of imagery to piggyback off the album title. Nicely done!

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention

**Contestant Name:** Stevenson High School

**Entry Title:** App-solutely Essential

**Entry Credit:** Satviki Inturi

**Judge Comment:** Clever word play with the main headline, which is attention-getting. The subhead is solid and informative.

**Competition Comment:** See judge comments.

## BEST HUMOROUS COMMENTARY

**Place Name:** First Place

**Contestant Name:** Downers Grove South High School

**Entry Title:** Everyday words out of context as modern baby names

**Entry Credit:** Yoldi Villa

**Judge Comment:** Well written and researched. Some of the random names the writer selected made me laugh out loud. Nicely written humorous opinion piece.

**Place Name:** Second Place

**Contestant Name:** New Trier High School

**Entry Title:** The Hidden Horror of The North Shore: Gonzo Special

<p><b>Entry Credit:</b> Jake Levin</p> <p><b>Judge Comment:</b> Clever and interesting way to pay homage to Hunter S. Thompson. Creative approach, with some nicely written passages.</p>
<p><b>Place Name:</b> Third Place</p> <p><b>Contestant Name:</b> New Trier High School</p> <p><b>Entry Title:</b> What brand of chewing gum is actually the best?</p> <p><b>Entry Credit:</b> Isabella Castro</p> <p><b>Judge Comment:</b> Well written rating piece. The extended sections discussing the details of each gum's flavor struck me as humorous. Nice ending.</p>
<p><b>Place Name:</b> Honorable Mention</p> <p><b>Contestant Name:</b> Downers Grove South High School</p> <p><b>Entry Title:</b> Nia's top icks at DGS</p> <p><b>Entry Credit:</b> Nia Ayala</p> <p><b>Judge Comment:</b> None</p>
<p><b>Competition Comment:</b> See judge comments.</p>

## BEST ILLUSTRATION

<p><b>Place Name:</b> First Place</p> <p><b>Contestant Name:</b> Glenbrook South High School</p> <p><b>Entry Title:</b> The AI takeover</p> <p><b>Entry Credit:</b> Ian Chiu</p> <p><b>Judge Comment:</b> Impactful art draws in the reader. The detail of the AI side keeps the reader comparing the two sides.</p>
<p><b>Place Name:</b> Second Place</p> <p><b>Contestant Name:</b> Downers Grove South High School</p> <p><b>Entry Title:</b> Mustangs stampede to polls</p> <p><b>Entry Credit:</b> Isaiah MacKenzie, Ren Espinoza</p> <p><b>Judge Comment:</b> Nice incorporation of statistics through art of dust clouds. Art is appealing to the eye.</p>
<p><b>Place Name:</b> Third Place</p> <p><b>Contestant Name:</b> New Trier High School</p> <p><b>Entry Title:</b> Illustration for "Leave high schoolers and our phones alone"</p> <p><b>Entry Credit:</b> Carina Brown</p> <p><b>Judge Comment:</b> Clever, funny art grows impressive as the details of the phone (convict) is studied.</p>

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention  
**Contestant Name:** Downers Grove South High School  
**Entry Title:** Holiday movies confuse  
**Entry Credit:** Amara Allen  
**Judge Comment:** Point is clear and art is strong.

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention  
**Contestant Name:** Huntley High School  
**Entry Title:** Forgotten, Not Remembered (Graphic)  
**Entry Credit:** Taryn Rainey  
**Judge Comment:** Choice of color and symbolism nicely displayed.

**Competition Comment:** So much impressive art in this category. A variety of unique illustration is impressive. Adding wording is always helpful, but make certain readers can read the words easily.

## BEST IN-DEPTH NEWS STORY

**Place Name:** First Place  
**Contestant Name:** Stevenson High School  
**Entry Title:** On the Right Path  
**Entry Credit:** Fiona Jin, Jill Wang, Sanjar Salomov  
**Judge Comment:** This was a very thorough examination that combined both research, expert interviews and student interviews. It made the what and why very apparent. Free of errors, strongly written.

**Place Name:** Second Place  
**Contestant Name:** Stevenson High School  
**Entry Title:** Desensitized to the drill  
**Entry Credit:** Saanvi Adusamalli, Anushkka Dhawan, Ellie Miller, Lynde Mogenson  
**Judge Comment:** This is one of the best takes I've seen on this topic. It's obviously something that all school communities can relate to. The mix of student, staff interviews and research tells the story and why it matters. Strongly written.

**Place Name:** Third Place  
**Contestant Name:** Downers Grove South High School  
**Entry Title:** Seniors swim in stress during college application process  
**Entry Credit:** Sophia Lodhi  
**Judge Comment:** This was a unique story topic that I'm sure the school community found valuable. It made the what clear while using student experience to show rather than tell the why. Well done.

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention  
**Contestant Name:** New Trier High School  
**Entry Title:** NT reviews cellphone policy amid national debate  
**Entry Credit:** Neil Sanderson, William Karr  
**Judge Comment:** This was an informative piece on the cell phone policy and how it impacts students for the better or worse. Well done.

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention  
**Contestant Name:** New Trier High School  
**Entry Title:** NT students take on 2024 election  
**Entry Credit:** Neil Sanderson  
**Judge Comment:** I enjoyed reading this piece, showcasing the involvement of the school community in the election and how politics have impacted school groups. Interesting and informative news feature.

**Competition Comment:** Another very tight competition. All of these submissions were ranked highly, and I hope all students are proud of what they submitted. Very strong writing across the board. I enjoyed reading new angles to stories. These all had great scene setting, research to support, and insight from students and staff that show rather than tell the why. Well done across the board.

## BEST INFOGRAPHIC

**Place Name:** First Place  
**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School  
**Entry Title:** AI: Earth killer - by the numbers  
**Entry Credit:** Natalia Atto  
**Judge Comment:** Excellent job! The organization and use of original art is very visually inviting.

**Place Name:** Second Place  
**Contestant Name:** Downers Grove South High School  
**Entry Title:** Mustangs Predicts  
**Entry Credit:** Cam Pagaduan  
**Judge Comment:** Really great graphic! Visually rich and interesting. I love the layering and depth produced with the design. Perhaps just a bit too dark overall.

**Place Name:** Third Place  
**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School  
**Entry Title:** South seeks sustainability  
**Entry Credit:** Erin Walker  
**Judge Comment:** The overall page design here is fantastic. The infographic really helps

support and enhance the story! I would like to see numbers included with the city names in the bar graph.

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention  
**Contestant Name:** Stevenson High School  
**Entry Title:** Passing on Attendance  
**Entry Credit:** Brayden Caldwell  
**Judge Comment:** Clever device (hall pass) to serve as the structure for the infographic - complements the story nicely.

**Competition Comment:** See judge comments.

## BEST MULTIMEDIA STORY PACKAGE

**Place Name:** First Place  
**Contestant Name:** New Trier High School  
**Entry Title:** NT girls basketball head coach has grown the game / Rodgers Out: A look at 25-year legacy in Illinois high school basketball  
**Entry Credit:** Avery Reis, Michael Batson  
**Judge Comment:** Good piece. Video was well done. I appreciate the effort in the research to develop the questions asked of the coach. This shows a great deal of professionalism. Excellent job! Good variety of shots, would like to have seen cutaways of the coach coaching--had cutaways of coach K. Overall excellent job.

**Place Name:** Second Place  
**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School  
**Entry Title:** V-show unites South performers  
**Entry Credit:** Andrew Collaku  
**Judge Comment:** Nice photos; would like to have seen more story in the article.

**Place Name:** Third Place  
**Contestant Name:** Stevenson High School  
**Entry Title:** Consortium Kicks Off 2025  
**Entry Credit:** Oliver Arora, Hannah Diab  
**Judge Comment:** good piece. like the link of songs; would like to have seen more photos/video with piece

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention  
**Contestant Name:** New Trier High School  
**Entry Title:** Ben Crane dazzles at state for first place, shatters NT record / NT track star Ben Crane reflects on his high school career  
**Entry Credit:** Jake Levin, Michael Batson  
**Judge Comment:** good use of video; awkward framing of shots; turn phone sideways for

better framing; including the clip from the office was unnecessary and a distraction from the piece

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention

**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School

**Entry Title:** Meet the new staff for the 24-25 school year

**Entry Credit:** Kaitlyn Jiang

**Judge Comment:** Good way to introduce new staff. I would put the teachers in their environment rather than mug shot like photos in front of a nondescript wall.

**Competition Comment:** See judge comments.

## BEST NEWS OR FEATURE PHOTO

**Place Name:** First Place

**Contestant Name:** New Trier High School

**Entry Title:** An American flag outside of a building on Winnetka Ave, near New Trier's Winnetka Campus

**Entry Credit:** Jake Levin

**Judge Comment:** I like that the photographer was out looking for images in the community and discovered and captured this scene.

**Place Name:** Second Place

**Contestant Name:** Downers Grove South High School

**Entry Title:** Caption in photo gallery: "Hernandez performs Cello Concert OP 85 Mvt IV Allego as a soloist."

**Entry Credit:** Dylan Mora

**Judge Comment:** Excellent image depicting the emotional intensity of the performance.

**Place Name:** Third Place

**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School

**Entry Title:** IMPROV IN ACTION: Students gather in a classroom to rehearse for thier upcoming production of Improvaganza!. Together, they played improv games while cheering and critiquing each other's performances.

**Entry Credit:** Andrew Collaku

**Judge Comment:** Nice enthusiastic moment!

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention

**Contestant Name:** New Trier High School

**Entry Title:** Dancers in Piper Goldman's piece wove around strings that symbolized their ties with one another

**Entry Credit:** Mara Saltzman

**Judge Comment:** Dramatic image with powerful lighting.

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention  
**Contestant Name:** Stevenson High School  
**Entry Title:** Jazz Cafe Hits the Floor  
**Entry Credit:** Siya Patel  
**Judge Comment:** Not sure which of the two pictures was the entry, but both are good!

**Competition Comment:** See judge comments.

## BEST NEWS STORY

**Place Name:** First Place  
**Contestant Name:** Downers Grove South High School  
**Entry Title:** Increased class sizes impact students' academic performance  
**Entry Credit:** Juliana Conyer  
**Judge Comment:** Very well written news story with obvious local relevance. A wealth of valuable details presented in a well-organized fashion. Great use of quotes from teachers, admin and students. Nice job!

**Place Name:** Second Place  
**Contestant Name:** Huntley High School  
**Entry Title:** Attending to make a change  
**Entry Credit:** Daniel Przybylko  
**Judge Comment:** Very well written and organized. Your lede creatively establishes context. Great details and quotes. Be mindful of grammar and style (e.g. comma placement, cap titles before names). Good news story with obvious local relevance.

**Place Name:** Third Place  
**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School  
**Entry Title:** D225 Board finalizes 2025-2026 school year calendar  
**Entry Credit:** Olivia Richards  
**Judge Comment:** Decently written news story with clean local impact. Plenty of good details and quotes. Try to keep ledes to one sentence; so many dates right at the top is a bit cluttered. Be mindful of style, especially comma placement.

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention  
**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School  
**Entry Title:** District 225 revamps honors: New curriculum launches in 2025-2026  
**Entry Credit:** Danielle Joseph  
**Judge Comment:** Decently written story with obvious local relevance. Plenty of good details and quotes. Attribution typically isn't necessary in the lede and tends to add to the clutter - save citation for 2nd or 3rd graf. Be mindful of style, especially capitalization of titles (not when they follow the name).

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention  
**Contestant Name:** Stevenson High School  
**Entry Title:** Security Changes at Stevenson Football Games  
**Entry Credit:** Tej Kosaraju, Leila Markicic  
**Judge Comment:** A decently written story with clear local relevance. Good sources and detail. Ledes should typically be kept to one sentence. Be mindful of style. Solid work.

**Competition Comment:** See judge comments.

## BEST OVERALL DESIGN

**Place Name:** First Place  
**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School  
**Entry Title:** The Oracle Page 1 - Volume LXV Issue 4, February 14, 2025  
**Entry Credit:** Sofia Cole, Sarah Park, Kaitlyn Jiang  
**Judge Comment:** Modular design achieved throughout. Text is generally clear and easy to read. Minimal widows and orphans. Most pages feature a dominant visual image. Liberal use of screens and other graphics maintain visual interest.

**Place Name:** Second Place  
**Contestant Name:** Stevenson High School  
**Entry Title:** Alice's Evidence  
**Entry Credit:** Fiona Jin, Hannah Diab, Siya Patel, Ishanvi Mishra  
**Judge Comment:** Eye-popping cover illustration beckons readers to look inside. Graphics are eye-catching without overpowering the pages. Liberal use of white space lets pages "breathe."

**Place Name:** Third Place  
**Contestant Name:** Huntley High School  
**Entry Title:** December Issue: The Huntley HS Voice  
**Entry Credit:** Irene Banerjee, Alexis Davis, Emma Christenson, Ly Martil, Sofia Bondi, Jadyn Sola, Taryn Rainey  
**Judge Comment:** Varying 2- and 3-column grids helps keep text readable and visually engaging. Subtle lavender touches help move eyes across the page. Liberal use of white space helps pages feel roomy.

**Competition Comment:** See judge comments.

## BEST PERSONALITY PROFILE

**Place Name:** First Place

**Contestant Name:** Downers Grove South High School

**Entry Title:** Klaeren finds his way to body positivity

**Entry Credit:** Kate Dziewinski

**Judge Comment:** This is beautifully done. It's a treat to read about a young man's struggle with weight loss and to see him succeed.

**Place Name:** Second Place

**Contestant Name:** Stevenson High School

**Entry Title:** Artist Feature: Alina Qian '25

**Entry Credit:** Fiona Jin, Leila Markicic

**Judge Comment:** Very strong story throughout

**Place Name:** Third Place

**Contestant Name:** Huntley High School

**Entry Title:** Turning It Up

**Entry Credit:** Irene Banerjee

**Judge Comment:** Great story, well told.

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention

**Contestant Name:** New Trier High School

**Entry Title:** NT sophomore, climate activist Scarlett Harper steps into political world

**Entry Credit:** Margy Burgoon

**Judge Comment:** Great story. The opening could use a bit more clarity on timeline as the piece mentions multiple ages up front, which is a tad confusing. Very good storytelling. A few more interviews, including with some of the people she affected, would be a worthy addition.

**Competition Comment:** See judge comments.

## BEST PHOTO GALLERY OR PHOTO SLIDESHOW

**Place Name:** First Place

**Contestant Name:** Stevenson High School

**Entry Title:** 10/10 Football Game

**Entry Credit:** Ansh Aggarwal

**Judge Comment:** These are truly amazing photos, some of the best sport action shots I've seen by a high school student. This is professional quality work!

**Place Name:** Second Place  
**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School  
**Entry Title:** V-show unites South performers  
**Entry Credit:** Andrew Collaku  
**Judge Comment:** Excellent variety of shots, very expressive.

**Place Name:** Third Place  
**Contestant Name:** Huntley High School  
**Entry Title:** Cocoa Crawl Photogallery  
**Entry Credit:** Maya Hiermann  
**Judge Comment:** Great job of telling the story of this event. The photos really give a sense of community life.

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention  
**Contestant Name:** Huntley High School  
**Entry Title:** AP Art Photos/Field Trip  
**Entry Credit:** Ly Martil  
**Judge Comment:** Very well-composed shots. The gallery gives us a memorable look at this class.

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention  
**Contestant Name:** Downers Grove South High School  
**Entry Title:** DGS hosts 'Dimensions' concert  
**Entry Credit:** Dylan Mora  
**Judge Comment:** Good use of a variety of shots and perspectives.

**Competition Comment:** The other entries were solid and would probably have received at least honorable mention in a less competitive division. Overall, the quality of photojournalism by all participants was outstanding.

## BEST PHOTO STORY

**Place Name:** First Place  
**Contestant Name:** Stevenson High School  
**Entry Title:** Beyond the Sidelines  
**Entry Credit:** Allyson Duan, Bhargavi Maddana  
**Judge Comment:** Generally good work! This is an instance where a smallish bit of copy would have helped -- it would have alleviated the need for lengthy captions for each photo. i dislike the practice of numbering photos and captions; place the captions adjacent to the photos they describe or rely on the old faithful "left," "right" and "above." Look at professional publications for guidance.

**Place Name:** Second Place

**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School

**Entry Title:** English desk-orating

**Entry Credit:** Anne Sullivan Beltran

**Judge Comment:** Presentation of the photos with captions is good. Remember to shoot for a single dominant photo in a grouping like this. Presentation of the photos with captions is good. Remember to shoot for a single dominant photo in a grouping like this. This entry stretches the definition of "moderate" amount of copy that appears in description of the category, however.

**Place Name:** Third Place

**Contestant Name:** Stevenson High School

**Entry Title:** Serving Up Success

**Entry Credit:** Sreeja Muthukannan, Priya Thakkar

**Judge Comment:** This entry is ore illustration than photo story: the only photos are individuals, placed on a court. visually appealing, however, and good storytelling.

**Competition Comment:** Entrants in this category should keep in mind that a "photo story" is just that: It relies almost exclusively on photos. It tells a story using those photos. A photo story is also a page (or portion of a page) to be designed by an editor: Most designers want to see a piece of dominant art in a photo story, minimal to moderate amounts of body copy, strong headline(s), captions/cutlines that tell the reader more than what's immediately apparent by looking at the photos, and a story -- a narrative -- that's worth telling. All photos in a photo story should not be the same size or shape. All photos need not be stacked on top of each other.

## BEST REVIEW

**Place Name:** First Place

**Contestant Name:** New Trier High School

**Entry Title:** 'A Complete Unknown' shows us why Bob Dylan is anything but

**Entry Credit:** Brendan Fijol

**Judge Comment:** This magnificent review succeeds in doing justice to the various contradictory sides of the film's iconic subject.

**Place Name:** Second Place

**Contestant Name:** New Trier High School

**Entry Title:** 'Nosferatu' brings the vampire into the light

**Entry Credit:** David Rhee

**Judge Comment:** The reviewer superbly captures how the film's titular character becomes an environment unto himself.

**Place Name:** Third Place  
**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School  
**Entry Title:** Swift's new album underwhelms  
**Entry Credit:** Molly Tomczyk  
**Judge Comment:** An excellent, richly textured look at the disappointments and strengths of Taylor Swift's new album.

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention  
**Contestant Name:** Downers Grove South High School  
**Entry Title:** Mitchell Tenpenny brings his meaning of life, love, and growing up to the spotlight in 'The 3rd'  
**Entry Credit:** Liam Wells  
**Judge Comment:** A sophisticated and thorough analysis of James Mitchell Tenpenny III's new album that makes effective use of lyric excerpts.

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention  
**Contestant Name:** Stevenson High School  
**Entry Title:** Third Time's the Charm  
**Entry Credit:** Aisha Fatima, Alex Xie  
**Judge Comment:** Even amidst the praise given here by the writers, they do a fine job of pinpointing the film's nagging flaws as well.

**Competition Comment:** I am frankly blown away by the quality and sophistication of these submissions, some of which would feel right at home on RogerEbert.com.

## BEST SERIOUS COMMENTARY

**Place Name:** First Place  
**Contestant Name:** New Trier High School  
**Entry Title:** NT, please address sexist rhetoric: Equity requires action  
**Entry Credit:** Allison Boehm  
**Judge Comment:** Strong call to action, with plenty of supporting examples. Repetition of "It's not about politics" is powerful and engaging for readers as well as being an effective organization tool.

**Place Name:** Second Place  
**Contestant Name:** Stevenson High School  
**Entry Title:** Missing the Moment  
**Entry Credit:** Adi Jaiswal  
**Judge Comment:** Just a brilliant, thoughtful essay that hits so many points, and therefore can connect with more readers. Use of transitions — crucial in a long piece like this — is excellent.

**Place Name:** Third Place  
**Contestant Name:** Huntley High School  
**Entry Title:** The struggle between studying and sleep  
**Entry Credit:** Sofia Bondi  
**Judge Comment:** Nice touch, including a student who's overwhelmed and a student who doesn't seem to have a problem with workload. Writer leaves plenty of room for readers to reflect on their own situations and come to their own conclusions.

**Competition Comment:** See judge comments.

## BEST SINGLE-PAGE STORY PACKAGE

**Place Name:** First Place  
**Contestant Name:** Downers Grove South High School  
**Entry Title:** Issue 1: Page 1  
**Entry Credit:** Olivia Velazquez, Juliana Conyer  
**Judge Comment:** I love the graphic, as it tells the story clearly about class sizes growing.

**Place Name:** Second Place  
**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School  
**Entry Title:** Tearing up the Turf  
**Entry Credit:** Conor Burke, Bailey Baker  
**Judge Comment:** Nice graphic about the increase in wins. Story nicely documents the team's success--and tough finish to the season against a rival.

**Place Name:** Third Place  
**Contestant Name:** Stevenson High School  
**Entry Title:** New Year, New Clubs  
**Entry Credit:** Leila Markicic, Sreeja Muthukannan  
**Judge Comment:** Clean and simple story - very easy to take in the information. Graphic makes the story inviting.

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention  
**Contestant Name:** New Trier High School  
**Entry Title:** NT Green Hockey looks to three-peat  
**Entry Credit:** Declan Quigley, Carolina Manguam  
**Judge Comment:** I like the graphic about the upcoming schedule - it's important to tell readers about what's next.

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention  
**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School  
**Entry Title:** Skating their way to glory

**Entry Credit:** Danielle Joseph, Meredith Bill

**Judge Comment:** Nice graphic layout at the bottom of the story.

**Competition Comment:** See judge comments.

## BEST SPORTS COMMENTARY

**Place Name:** First Place

**Contestant Name:** Downers Grove South High School

**Entry Title:** NFL games resemble reality television

**Entry Credit:** Sebastian Blanco

**Judge Comment:** An excellent opinion piece comparing sport to entertainment to explore a sensitive topic.

**Place Name:** Second Place

**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School

**Entry Title:** Bulgarian dance brings belonging

**Entry Credit:** Stella Ivanov

**Judge Comment:** A well-written opinion piece on an unexpected sports topic.

**Place Name:** Third Place

**Contestant Name:** Stevenson High School

**Entry Title:** Changing the Game

**Entry Credit:** Satviki Inturi, Sona Surya

**Judge Comment:** Using facts and examples makes this an outstanding commentary on efforts to expand inclusion in sports.

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention

**Contestant Name:** New Trier High School

**Entry Title:** End of an era for The Professor

**Entry Credit:** Neil Sanderson

**Judge Comment:** A nice, well-reported, commentary.

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention

**Contestant Name:** Stevenson High School

**Entry Title:** Foul Play

**Entry Credit:** Fiona Jin, Himang Sharma

**Judge Comment:** A gritty opinion piece on an important topic not only for sports but also for society.

**Competition Comment:** See judge comments.

**BEST SPORTS FEATURE STORY****Place Name:** First Place**Contestant Name:** Downers Grove South High School**Entry Title:** Student section disappears at halftime, leaves athletes 'demotivated'**Entry Credit:** Juliana Conyer**Judge Comment:** Intriguing look at the challenges high school sports face to stay relevant to the overall student body. Good use of quotes from players describing how it feels to play in front of sparsely filled stands. Very interesting topic choice.**Place Name:** Second Place**Contestant Name:** Huntley High School**Entry Title:** Tumbling Toward Triumph**Entry Credit:** Taryn Rainey**Judge Comment:** Nicely written and well organized feature capturing the excitement, exhilaration -- and stress -- of competitive cheer. Clever top/bottom bookend technique provides a payoff for those who read to the very end.**Place Name:** Third Place**Contestant Name:** Huntley High School**Entry Title:** Vision of Victory**Entry Credit:** Drew Diversey**Judge Comment:** Inspiring profile of a student who overcame severe vision loss to become an elite triathlete. Comments from family, coaches and teachers help paint a complete portrait. Well written and organized. Small details add color.**Place Name:** Honorable Mention**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School**Entry Title:** Athlete Stress: Coping, balancing through pressure**Entry Credit:** Journalistic Writing Staff Writers**Judge Comment:** Well written take on the importance of stress management for student athletes. Good mix of student and faculty sources.**Competition Comment:** See judge comments.**BEST SPORTS NEWS STORY****Place Name:** First Place**Contestant Name:** New Trier High School**Entry Title:** NT girls swimming and diving races to state after sectional win**Entry Credit:** Carolina Mangum**Judge Comment:** A well written article that highlights what the swim team has accomplished and the effort put forth to succeed at such a consistent rate. Great quotes

from the coach and swimmers talking about what makes the team competitive and the importance of the grind. Very well done.

**Place Name:** Second Place

**Contestant Name:** New Trier High School

**Entry Title:** NT dance team places No. 15 at state, the highest in program history

**Entry Credit:** Carolina Mangum

**Judge Comment:** This story does a great job of explaining how the dance program works, how the team performed and how they're looking to improve. I had to look hard for a flaw – and this is just a nitpick – but maybe add one or two more paragraphs highlighting the difficulties of the team before transitioning into what their hopes for next year are.

**Place Name:** Third Place

**Contestant Name:** Stevenson High School

**Entry Title:** Patriots Win the NSC for First Time in Eight Years

**Entry Credit:** Ansh Aggarwal, Oliver Arora

**Judge Comment:** A great rundown of an important game with historic context. Nice detail really gave imagery and gave the reader a sense of what the atmosphere was like. A couple of quotes on how the players feel to be the team that broke the eight year drought would help highlight the significance of the accomplishment.

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention

**Contestant Name:** Downers Grove South High School

**Entry Title:** Girls basketball shoots for third straight WSG title

**Entry Credit:** Ryan Deacy

**Judge Comment:** Great analytical piece that adds context to help emphasize how good the team has been in recent years. Transitions into the coach and player quotes can be a little smoother but the quotes added valuable insight on the team's mentality.

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention

**Contestant Name:** Huntley High School

**Entry Title:** Get the ball in, get the ball deep

**Entry Credit:** Carrie Willig

**Judge Comment:** Fantastic imagery, the lede really captured my attention. Some of the details on the team's performance is a little too far down in the story, swapping it higher up with some of that great imagery will create a more vivid but informative and engaging story.

**Competition Comment:** Such a fantastic job done throughout this competition. Every entrant should be proud of their submissions, every single article had at least one area that was executed exceptionally well.

**BEST SPORTS PHOTO****Place Name:** First Place**Contestant Name:** Stevenson High School**Entry Title:** Patriots Win the NSC for First Time in Eight Years**Entry Credit:** Ansh Aggarwal**Judge Comment:** Exceptional football shot! Well-done!! Tight framing and sharp image(s).**Place Name:** Second Place**Contestant Name:** New Trier High School**Entry Title:** Senior Keri Rothenberg tosses up a serve during the teams senior night win against Evanston Township High School**Entry Credit:** Declan Quigley**Judge Comment:** Absolutely lovely lighting. Love how the ball is illuminated.**Place Name:** Third Place**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School**Entry Title:** LOCKED DOWN: Things get intense when Freshman starter Hunter Theil guards a Wildkit (right) during the South-Evanston game on Jan. 1. All that matters to Thiel (left) in the moment is defending his court with everything he's got.**Entry Credit:** Adrian Bobrowski**Judge Comment:** Love the intensity of the moment. Powerful and animated.**Place Name:** Honorable Mention**Contestant Name:** Downers Grove South High School**Entry Title:** Caption in photo gallery: "Senior pole vaulter Becca Snouffer soars over the bar in her second vault..."**Entry Credit:** Sophia Lodhi**Judge Comment:** Compelling frozen moment! Caught in the air!!**Place Name:** Honorable Mention**Contestant Name:** New Trier High School**Entry Title:** Senior Noah Cappochi and the rest of the squad celebrate with students after their Homecoming win over Palatine High School on Sept. 20**Entry Credit:** Declan Quigley**Judge Comment:** Love the composition and enthusiasm of the moment.**Competition Comment:** See judge comments.

**BEST STAFF EDITORIAL****Place Name:** First Place**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School**Entry Title:** First Amendment Rights: Journalism must be protected locally, nationally**Entry Credit:** Editorial Board**Judge Comment:** Awesome job here. You do important work to speak up about how you were wrongly treated and I know your compelling voice was heard by your intended audience.**Place Name:** Second Place**Contestant Name:** Downers Grove South High School**Entry Title:** Editorial: DGS commons creates unexpected chaos**Entry Credit:** Juliana Conyer**Judge Comment:** Great work here! I love editorials that allow the reader to learn something about the school. This does a great job of that while taking a stand on an important issue for students.**Place Name:** Third Place**Contestant Name:** Huntley High School**Entry Title:** Battling Academic Burnout**Entry Credit:** Irene Banerjee**Judge Comment:** Very nice job here! Always speak up about issues impacting students and you can't go wrong.**Place Name:** Honorable Mention**Contestant Name:** Downers Grove South High School**Entry Title:** Citizens must take environmental action when leaders won't**Entry Credit:** Juliana Conyer**Judge Comment:** Such an important topic and you do an impressive job of making your point and voice clear.**Place Name:** Honorable Mention**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School**Entry Title:** AI: earth killer: usage depletes resources**Entry Credit:** Editorial Board**Judge Comment:** Nice job taking on such a hot topic!**Competition Comment:** This was another category of stiff competition and I'm glad to have gotten the chance to read these. The best editorials come when you're speaking out about something you find passion in and it's even better when you take a moment to reflect on something happening at your school.

**BEST USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA****Place Name:** First Place**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School**Entry Title:** Glenbrook South Oracle Instagram**Entry Credit:** Kaitlyn Jiang, Sara Rahman, Kate Shambo, Aarya Nigam, David Schleicher, Mady Yap**Judge Comment:** None**Place Name:** Second Place**Contestant Name:** Huntley High School**Entry Title:** The Voice: Instagram Account**Entry Credit:** Carrie Willig**Judge Comment:** None**Place Name:** Third Place**Contestant Name:** New Trier High School**Entry Title:** New Trier News Instagram**Entry Credit:** Declan Quigley**Judge Comment:** None**Place Name:** Honorable Mention**Contestant Name:** Downers Grove South High School**Entry Title:** Twitter: @DGSBlueprint**Entry Credit:** Liam Wells**Judge Comment:** None**Place Name:** Honorable Mention**Contestant Name:** Downers Grove South High School**Entry Title:** Instagram: downerssouthblueprint**Entry Credit:** Grace Lube, Nia Ayala**Judge Comment:** None**Competition Comment:** Overall these are great examples of how to promote content but also have fun with the audience.**BEST VIDEO STORY****Place Name:** First Place**Contestant Name:** New Trier High School**Entry Title:** Nation's No. 1 punter looks to find success in his next chapter at NU**Entry Credit:** Lauren Sullivan

**Judge Comment:** Good video as is, but this had the potential to be much better. First and foremost, we're missing essential numbers and info about this athlete. What's his punting average? His height, weight? What makes him stand out from other punters? Why is he considered the No. 1 punter in the nation? What's his technique? Some comments from one of the Northwestern coaches would have been nice. We also needed more b-roll footage of the punter in action, including in the All-American game mentioned late in the video. The walk-and-talk segment was nicely done, but the static interview in the cafeteria went on too long and should have been broken up by b-roll instead of stills. This video is solid, but it would have been stronger if it had been trimmed to under three minutes.

**Place Name:** Second Place

**Contestant Name:** Downers Grove South High School

**Entry Title:** DGS shows school spirit at winter pep assembly

**Entry Credit:** Eleanor Loznicka, Adrian Herres, Nia Ayala

**Judge Comment:** Great length and nice pace! Lots of good b-roll. Strong narration. Audio quality is a bit inconsistent, especially in the second half of the video. But overall, well done!

**Place Name:** Third Place

**Contestant Name:** New Trier High School

**Entry Title:** Bear-apy, Ep. 2

**Entry Credit:** Michael Batson

**Judge Comment:** This was really funny. Definitely out of the ordinary compared to the other entries in this category. The host does a great job of selling the therapy conceit. Very clever, lots of fun.

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention

**Contestant Name:** Downers Grove South High School

**Entry Title:** DGS starts speech season

**Entry Credit:** Adele Kelly

**Judge Comment:** The poor audio quality in the intro and outro keeps this from placing higher. The audio really should have been fixed before publishing this video. Re-recording the intro and outro would have been the right move. The rest of the video is solid, with interesting b-roll and informative soundbites. A few details about the speech team's past performance would have been helpful. Does DGS routinely challenge for the state title in speech? We aren't told. Some info about the team's 2024-25 schedule would also have helped.

**Competition Comment:** See judge comments.

**BEST WEBSITE**

**Place Name:** First Place

**Contestant Name:** Stevenson High School

**Entry Title:** Statesman

**Entry Credit:** Adi Jaiswal, Ansh Aggarwal

**Judge Comment:** Clean header & interactive homepage elements. I like the newsletter call to action button in header/footer. Great use of in-article flourish polls and graphs. Content is current and has internal/external linking. Consider adding article tags, to help aggregate content and improve SEO. Nice graphics for feature articles. Multimedia elements could use a main image or placeholder podcast image. Letter to Editor form for reader-generated content is nice. If possible, keep the multimedia section updated with new content, when possible. Mobile is responsive. Passed core web vitals on desktop. Well done, Statesman!

**Place Name:** Second Place

**Contestant Name:** Downers Grove South High School

**Entry Title:** Blueprint

**Entry Credit:** Juliana Conyer, Kate Dziejewski, Liam Wells, Olivia Velazquez, Nia Ayala, Abby Heavrin, Yoldi Villa, Adrian Herres, Elsa Kramer, Grace Lube, Mikella Marchszak, Ky'm Young, Sebastain Blanco, Sophia Blanco, Ren Espinoza

**Judge Comment:** Nice header with breaking news ticker. Footer includes about & contact info. Well organized navigation and homepage layout. Current content with in-article galleries, pull quotes, tagging, and some internal/external linking. Multimedia videos are nice. Consider adding a multimedia section to showcase this work. Good Opinion category including cartoons, columns, editorials, and letter to the editor. Mobile is responsive and passed core web vitals. Great site, Blueprint!

**Place Name:** Third Place

**Contestant Name:** Glenbrook South High School

**Entry Title:** The Oracle website

**Entry Credit:** Kaitlyn Jiang, Sofia Cole, Sarah Park, Sara Rahman, Kate Shambo, Aarya Nigam, David Schleicher, Mady Yap

**Judge Comment:** Clean header and well organized navigation. Content is current and nice use of graphics. Try to give photo, illustration, stock photo credits with every image. Consider adding tags & internal/external links in more articles. I like the web exclusives section drawing attention to online content. Responsive on mobile. Passed core web vitals. Great job, Glenbrook South!

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention

**Contestant Name:** New Trier High School

**Entry Title:** The New Trier News

**Entry Credit:** New Trier News 2024-2025 Staff

**Judge Comment:** Clean header with social icons & search bar. Organized navigation & graphic dropdowns. Nice category layout pages. I like the multimedia section with current

videos & podcasts. Newsletter subscribe is a plus. Some articles incorporate a lot of best practices including pull quotes, internal/external linking, inline photos with credits, tags and in some cases spotlight links. Passed core web vitals. Well done, New Trier News!

**Place Name:** Honorable Mention

**Contestant Name:** Huntley High School

**Entry Title:** Huntleyvoice.com

**Entry Credit:** Irene Banerjee, Emma Christenson, Alexis Davis

**Judge Comment:** Good to see social links in the header & footer. Good navigation. Articles look like there are internal/external links and tags. Photos have captions & source credits. However, there needs to be some consistency with sizing & optimization. Well done on creating video & audio content! Consider tagging these so they can be aggregated & linked in your Media section. Site passed core web vitals. Good job, Huntley!

**Competition Comment:** See judge comments.