



**Honoring Journalism and Communications
Professionals in San Diego County Who Have Excelled
in Their Craft**

**Presented by the
San Diego Press Club Board of Directors
and the
2025-2026 Honorary Committee**

San Diego's best communicators and professionals are honored each year at the Excellence in Journalism Awards, hosted by the San Diego Press Club. The 52nd Annual EIJ Awards is being held here today, at the Encore Event Center in Kearny Mesa. The Encore Event Center is formerly the historic XETV 6 studios, which, in 1953, was the second broadcast television station in San Diego. More than 500 awards in 130 categories and 10 divisions will be awarded to San Diego's finest



reporters, writers, artists, photographers, videographers and public relations professionals. College media is also being honored.

PROGRAM

5:30 - 6 p.m.

PRIVATE RECEPTION

Honorary Committee, Sponsors and their guests

6 -7 p.m.

WELCOME RECEPTION

Appetizers: Gourmet Market Board, Lumpia, Spinach & Cheese Pastries, Meatball Marinara on a Stick, and Dessert Bar.

7 p.m.

Election of Board of Directors, Officers

Scholarships Presentation

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Jan Percival Lipscomb, 1992-1993	Pauline Repard, 2016-2017
Carl Larsen, 1993-1994	Kristen Castillo, 2017-2018
Andrew Kleske, 1994-1995	Karyl Carmignani, 2018-2019
Jerry Ringer, 1995-1996	Albert Fulcher, 2019-2020
Rod Riggs, 1996-1997	Eileen Gaffen, 2020-2022
Donna Alm, 1997-1998	Nicole Vargas, 2022-2025

SPECIAL AWARDS

HAROLD KEEN AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION IN JOURNALISM: GINNY CREIGHTON



The Harold Keen Special Award is given to the journalist who has, throughout his/her career, gone above and beyond standard practices for the sake of fairness and truth telling.

Virginia (Ginny) Creighton, photographer for KGTV 10 News, is the winner of the Harold Keen Award for Outstanding Contributions in Journalism. She was nominated by former

colleague J.W. August and selected by an overwhelming vote of the previous winners.

Creighton has worked for KGTV for 45 years, her entire professional career. Creighton, daughter of a United States Navy pilot and United States Navy nurse, grew up as the middle sibling of three with beagles. Creighton notes one of the dogs flew with the Blue Angels "Fat Albert" support aircraft.

Creighton earned a communications degree from Pepperdine University, and went to work at KGTV, first as an assignment editor. After what she describes as "decades" on the assignment desk, she shifted into her current role as a photojournalist.

In his nomination of Creighton, August called her work as an assignment editor “legendary.” describing her in part, “There are few people of consequence in San Diego who are in or out of the news business who haven’t dealt with Virginia. Just ask.

The Andy Mace Award for Outstanding Contribution in Public Relations: Julie Wright



Julie Wright, president of San Diego-based public relations firm [\(W\)right On Communications, Inc.](#), is the recipient of the 2025 Andy Mace Award for Excellence in Public Relations. She was nominated by Elizabeth Peci and selected through a vote of the previous winners.

The Andy Mace Special Award is given to a PR practitioner who, over the course of his or her career, has exemplified fairness and integrity and has effectively disseminated the truth to concerned publics.

Julie Wright, president of San Diego-based public relations firm [\(W\)right On Communications, Inc.](#), is the recipient of the 2025 Andy Mace Award for Excellence in Public Relations. She was nominated by Elizabeth Peci and selected through a vote of the previous winners.

On learning about her award, Wright said, “I’m so honored by the nomination and touched to receive this award given what it stands for and those who’ve received it before me.”

Wright began her career as a journalist, working as a weekend news anchor for the FM radio station serving Whistler, B.C.

She founded (W)right On Communications in her hometown of Vancouver, B.C. in 1998 and later expanded to San Diego and opened offices in Los Angeles and Seattle.

Over the years, (W)right On Communications has earned national recognition. The agency was named a PRNEWS [2026 Agency Elite](#), which represents the top 120 best and brightest

PR and communications firms, as well as Newsweek's list of [America's Best Public Relations Agencies](#) 2024, joining 150 of the most recommended agencies by sector or area of specialization.

52nd Annual Excellence in Journalism Scholarships

Each year, the San Diego Press Club provides scholarships to local students who are in two-year and four-year colleges pursuing degrees in the journalism and communication fields. This is only possible through scholarship sponsors, event sponsors, and the San Diego Press Club Honorary Committee members.

2025 Frank Saldana Memorial Scholarship



Swasti Singhai is a San Diego resident, and a third-year student studying chemistry and legal studies at UC Berkeley. She is a news reporter and editor for her college's newspaper, *The Daily Californian* and was a news intern at the *Times of San Diego* this last summer. Swasti is the 2025 recipient of the San Diego Press Club's Frank Saldana Memorial Scholarship.

"I'm super grateful to receive this scholarship and want to send my appreciation to the Saldana family. This scholarship will be super beneficial for me to continue reporting while being a full-time student," said Swasti.

This scholarship is funded each year by the Saldana family.

When Lisa Saldana was told that Swasti earned this year's scholarship, she said, "Please let Swasti know that I'm delighted that a student from my alma mater has received this award! I know my Dad would have called me immediately, he was that proud of the fact that I was the first person in our family to attend and graduate from a 4-year university."

2025 San Diego Press Club Honorary Committee Scholarship



Alfonso Julian Camacho, our Honorary Committee scholarship recipient, is a student at Southwestern College and an award-winning journalist, magazine designer, and author whose work has been recognized by the Associated Collegiate Press, Journalism Association of Community colleges, College Media Association, and California College Media Association. He writes for *The Sun*, and writes and designs for *El Sol*, two of the nation's most honored college

publications. He has been featured as a presenting artist and speaker at national conferences and film premieres.

Alfonso is the author of multiple books in English and Spanish, including "Autistic and Awesome and Preparing for School." He is the founder of Colmena Academy, a k-12 school supporting children with speech challenges, and Builders of Eloquence and Engagement, LLC, teaching communication to nonspeaking individuals.

Alfonso speaks regularly on autism, inclusion, and alternative communication methods and has been a keynote speaker and panelist at conferences, including Autism Tree Project Foundation's Neuroscience Conference and Love & Autism.

“I am honored and undeserving of this scholarship. I sit in a room surrounded by brilliant students and professional journalists. A room I did not know existed until I crossed the threshold of Dr. Max Branscomb’s classroom. I am in awe of this moment and this opportunity. I will use the scholarship to acquire the technology and resources I need to continue my studies. I hope to acquire a keyboard with word prediction on its face that allows me to have faster conversations and conduct better interviews. As a developing speaker, technology-based accommodations are crucial for me. Thank you for helping me achieve this,” said Camacho.

Meet the 2025-26 Honorary Committee

(**Bold** indicates Charter Membership)

Cliff Albert

JW August

Pat Broderick

Marena Bronson

Barry Bloom

Patricial Broderick

Marena Bronson

Barbara Bry

Maytè Rodriguez-Cedillo

Scott Carr

Laura Castañeda

Tanya Mannes Castaneda

Nancy Davidson

Kathi Diamant

Maggie Espinosa

Gayle Lynn Falkenthal

Steve Fiorina

Lynn Friedmann

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Tom Gable

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Elizabeth Hansen

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Nicole Sours Larson

David Lewis

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Dennis Morgigno

Andrea Naversen

Bob Rauch

Pauline Repard

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Justin Salter

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Dave Stall

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Lori Streifler

Lee Swanson

Nathalie Taylor

Linda Rosas

Maria Villalobos

Tom Vollenweider

Denise Walker Veder

Robert M. Witty

Julie Wright



Join the Honorary Committee today!



The San Diego Press Club
2025 Excellence in Journalism Awards Winners

Best of Show

Television & Online Video

Enedina Cisneros, Kimberly Hunt, Jessica Howard, Gerald Labrador, Luella Mata

“Contaminated Coast: Call for Federal Action”

KGTV ABC 10News

Magazine

Mateo Hoke

“House Music

San Diego Magazine

Judges comment: “This was a solid entry. Not only was the writing strong, and vivid, the photos were stunning. This was an exceptional Magazine piece. All in all, a great article with great photos made this one the best in show!”

Non-Daily Newspaper

Jess Levy

“No Passport Needed”

Carlsbad Chamber of Commerce

Judges Comment: “This was a straight-to-the-point guide for locals and tourists alike. I liked the short, but strong descriptions. Every newspaper should have articles like this because everyone is always looking to do something fun!”

Online and Daily Newspaper

JW August and David Washburn

“LaRoche, the Wondering Cop”

KPBS

Judges Comment: “A strongly reported and well written account of a little-known problem with American policing.”

Radio/Podcast

Salk Communications Office

“Beyond Lab Walls”

Salk Institute for Biological Studies

Body of Work

Eric Duvall
Ocean Beach Historical Society

Rising Star

Nicole Mlynaryk
The Salk Institute

Wildcard

Governance Under Fire
Macy Meinhart

“Shaken, But OK: San Diego Housing Agency Amid Federal Crackdown”
San Diego Voice & Viewpoint

College – Print: Best Newspaper

First Place: CTM Staff

City Times Media | San Diego City College

College – Print: Best Magazine

First Place: Staff

The Summit | Grossmont College

Judges Comment: "The variety of content was impressive, providing a topical overview of issues, events, elections, tips with a balance of entertaining and serious content. The visuals were a highlight, drawing the reader into the content. The piece on immigration enforcement was especially impressive, as was the look at the closure of a pool and its impact on students. Sports coverage was also well done."

College – Print: News

First Place: Alexa Lima “Enrollment management meltdown”

The Sun | Southwestern College

Judges Comment: “Loved the stories. Lots of useful information.”

Second Place: Carla Gutierrez “Mexico’s femicide fury”

The Sun | Southwestern College

Judges Comment: “Great looking. Sharp layout. Excellent content.”

Third Place: CTM Staff “LIVE UPDATES: City College community goes to the polls
(with video)”

City Times Media | San Diego City College

Judges Comment: "Nice looking page. Clean layout, useful information."

Honorable Mention: Sydney Brammer “Annoyed by fees? Here’s why some
majors cost more than others” The Point | Point Loma Nazarene University

Judges Comment: “Excellent info. It's important that you're covering topics
essential to students.”

College – Print: Feature

First Place: Alfonso Julián Camacho, Dira Wong “Despair envelops Tijuana
refugees” The Sun | Southwestern College

Second Place: Alexa Lima “National City’s immortal ‘Angel Baby’” The Sun |
Southwestern College

Third Place: Blanca Esthela Castañeda Garcia “Godfather of Chicano theater” The
Sun | Southwestern College

Honorable Mention: Natalia Plaza “A brief shining moment” The Sun |
Southwestern College

College – Print: Column

First Place: Alfonso Julian Camacho The Sun | Southwestern College

Judges Comment: "Superb pieces. Excellent choice of subject. Heartfelt writing --
which, of course, is the difference between great column writing and the news."

Second Place: Zeke Watson The Sun | Southwestern College

Judges Comment: “Very good. Excellent perspective.”

College – Print: Investigative

First Place: Xiomara Santospieve

"AI bots stealing classes, FAFSA" The Sun | Southwestern College

Second Place: The Sun Staff

"Students, librarians speak out about rats" The Sun | Southwestern College

Third Place: Diego Higuera

“PLNU again on ‘worst’ list” The Sun | Southwestern College

Honorable Mention: Diego Higuera

"As SWC reading levels drop, support system withers away" The Sun | Southwestern College

College – Print: Opinion/Category

First Place: Alexa Lima

“Clawing back hard-earned speech rights” The Sun | Southwestern College

Second Place: Alexa Lima

“Gun violence steals young Americans’ futures and dreams” The Sun | Southwestern College

Third Place: Alexa Lima, Anahy J. Gutierrez

“We need gov board to work together” The Sun | Southwestern College

Honorable Mention: Tyra Lawley

“MTS's new policies won't make them more money” City Times Media | San Diego City College

College – Print: Reviews

First Place: Alexa Lima

“Michelangelo of metal” The Sun | Southwestern College

Judges Comment: "Informative, knowledgeable, and compelling. Made me curious to visit the installation!"

Second Place: David J. Bohnet

"San Diego City theatre department delivers raw, emotional performance "Stupid F##king Bird" City Times Media | San Diego City College

Judges Comment: "I enjoyed this writer's perspective of the play and knowledge of theater. Well-written."

Third Place: Toni Gibson "GLORIOUS GLORIA"

The Sun | Southwestern College

Judges Comment: " I saw this play and had no idea that the cast was sick! Kudos to their professionalism. I enjoyed this writer's analysis of the plot, songs, and performances."

Honorable Mention: Lesley Garcia

"Sabrina Carpenter's ""Short n' Sweet"" is bold, unserious, and so much fun" The Daily Aztec | San Diego State University

Judges Comment: "Not a huge fan of Ms. Carpenter but this writer's research on her Background and songs made for an 'unserious' read!"

College – Print: Sports

First Place: Julio Rodriguez

"From bowler to bowl games" The Sun | Southwestern College

Judges Comment: "A beautiful story of perseverance and heart. This was a difficult category to judge, because all the entries were excellent."

Second Place: Jose Guzman

"Set shot superhero" The Sun | Southwestern College

Judges Comment: "The Southwestern College women's soccer team is a class act. Sports bring out character in those who participate. The women Jaguars' soccer/basketball team is a heartwarming, feel-good story about teamwork, friendship, and commitment. This was a difficult category to judge, because all the entries were excellent."

Third Place: Valeryah Lara-Urrea

“Cheerleaders a welcome sight” The Sun | Southwestern College

Judges Comment: "A surprising and charming sports story told with wonderful cheerleading Heart and spirit. This was a difficult category to judge, because all the entries were excellent."

Honorable Mention: Danny Straus

“Brother of Padres star making his own name at City College” City Times Media | San Diego City College

Judges Comment: "A great story about the younger brother of Padres All-Star Fernando Tatis playing baseball for San Diego City College. This was a difficult category to judge, because all the entries were excellent."

College – Print: Photography

First Place: Mijail Jones

“Otherworldly dance” The Sun | Southwestern College

Judges Comment: “Outstanding use of shadows and contrast in feature photo...an otherworldly photograph”

Second Place: Sisy Sannoh

“Montse la Maravilla” The Sun | Southwestern College

Judges Comment: “This photo captures sight and sound...motion and rhythm”

Third Place: Yanelli Zavina Robles

“Pompom powerhouses” The Sun | Southwestern College

Judges Comment: "This is, plain and simple, a very cute picture"

Honorable Mention: Nadia Lavin

“City College’s Students for Justice in Palestine organize ‘Dabke Dance’ flashmob protest” City Times Media | San Diego City College

Judges Comment: “Powerful image of protest and anger”

College – Print: Drawing, Illustration or Cartoon

First Place: Carla Labto

“National City’s Immortal ‘Angel Baby’” The Sun | Southwestern College

Judges Comment: "This illustration captures the eye. It could even be called ""iconic."" This is an engaging portrait of one of National City's own who made it big - a perfect illustration to the story."

Second Place: Carla Labto

"I stand to honor my military family" The Sun | Southwestern College

Judges Comment: "This illustration is a sensitive depiction of the conflicts and tensions surrounding the topic of the piece: ""Being a Black Veteran."" The image of the young man saluting the flag is poignant - and the subtle shadow of a uniformed service member adds to its depth."

Third Place: Luke Bradbury, Danny Straus

"WHAT THE CANDIDATES SAY: Housing, homelessness on the City College Community Agenda, November 2024" City Times Media | San Diego City College

Honorable Mention: Carla Labto

"Doing right by Native Americans" The Sun | Southwestern College

Judges Comment: "This illustration, showing a spirit being rising from a ceremonial fire, was drawn with cultural sensitivity and respect. The crowd watching is interesting due to their varied expressions. It is an interesting and engaging image."

College – Print: Cover Design

First Place: El Sol Staff El Sol Magazine XV The Sun | Southwestern College

Judges Comment: "Superb composition and use of color."

Second Place: El Sol Staff El Sol Magazine XIV The Sun | Southwestern College

College – Print: Photo Essay

First Place: Yanelli Zavina Robles, Dira Marie Wong, Cristian Piñeda, Sahra Quiroga

"Las Chicanas of Chicano Park" The Sun | Southwestern College

Judges Comment: "Impressive use of photographs to help tell the story of Las Chicanas of Chicano Park. Wonderful layout."

Second Place: Keila Menjivar Zamora, Bailey Kohlen

"GALLERY: City College faculty, students among protesters against mass deportations"

City Times Media | San Diego City College

Judges Comment: "Powerful images add impact to mass deportation protest essay."

College – Print: Feature Layout Story

First Place: Yanelli Zavina Robles, Dira Maria Wong, Cristian Piñeda, Sahra Quiroga"

"Las Chicanas of Chicano Park" The Sun | Southwestern College

Judges Comment: "Colorful, interesting photos set the mood for the story. This was a difficult category to judge, because all the entries were excellent."

Second Place: Julio Rodriguez "From bowler to bowl games"

The Sun | Southwestern College

Judges Comment: "Full page image of Luis Perez in Chargers uniform explains the story in a single photo. It's a grabber! This was a difficult category to judge, because all the entries were excellent."

Third Place: Luz Maria Clayton, Ivan Medida, Andrea Aladin, Alfonso Julián Camacho

"National City's Immortal 'Angel Baby'" The Sun | Southwestern College

Judges Comment: "Good balance of images and text. Interesting history of Rosie and the Originals. This was a difficult category to judge, because all the entries were excellent."

Honorable Mention: Luz Maria Clayton, Ivan Medida, Andrea Aladin, Alfonso Julián Camacho "I stand to honor my military family" The Sun | Southwestern College

Judges Comment: "Layout makes the story very readable. Extensive use of drop quotes. This was a difficult category to judge, because all the entries were excellent."

College: TV & Online Video Newscast: General News Story

First Place: CTM Staff "AUDIO: Trump's Executive Orders, SDCCD Chancellor Greg Smith on the Knights Community Round Table"

City Times Media | San Diego City College

Judges Comment: "Although it was difficult to hear the student editors question the SDCCD Chancellor in this Community Round Table, the scope of their conversation was broad and lively."

College: TV & Online Video Newscast

First Place: CTTV Staff "NEWSCENE: New parking laws coming to San Diego, holiday travel surging, spring registration opening" City Times Media | San Diego City College

Second Place: CTTV Staff "NEWSCENE: State, San Diego election results continue to come in"

City Times Media | San Diego City College

Daily & Online Newspapers: Breaking News

First Place: Phillip Molnar "Music agent Dave Shapiro and ex-Devil Wears Prada drummer believed killed in plane crash" The San Diego Union-Tribune

Judges Comment: "This piece demonstrated speed along with razor-sharp attention to detail."

Second Place: Brenda Gregorio-Nieto, Christina Bravo, Danielle Smith
"6 on private jet presumed dead after crash into San Diego neighborhood."

NBC 7 San Diego

Judges Comment: "Complete coverage from a team with boots on the ground. Great package."

Third Place: Lara McCaffrey "ICE arrests several workers from South Park restaurant" KPBS

Judges Comment: "This story showed the importance of having an ear to the ground as well as a member of the press present as history unfolds at the local level."

Honorable Mention: Swasti Singhai "Afghan who aided U.S. Army detained by ICE in San Diego Immigration Court" Times of San Diego

Judges Comment: “A great tip led to a great story here.”

Daily & Online Newspapers: General News

First Place: Ron Donoho “Laura Fink: Why She’s Not Mourning the Death of Bob Filner.”

The San Diego Sun

Judges Comment: “Nicely written story exploring reaction to a news event.”

Daily & Online Newspapers: Investigative Reporting

First Place: Joshua Silla, Madison Geering “Blighted Fault Line Park in East Village Remains a Monument to Bad Management” The San Diego Sun

Second Place: JW August "A wandering cop--Jonathan LaRoche, El Cajon Police Department" Times of San Diego

Daily & Online Newspapers: Architecture and Design

First Place: Nicole Sours Larson “Normal Heights property takes hilltop dreams to another level” The San Diego Union-Tribune

Judges Comment: "A sweet story on a couple making their dream — home — come true."

Second Place : Nicole Sours Larson “Learning on the job: How a Kensington couple discovered a passion for historic preservation”

The San Diego Union-Tribune

Third Place Nicole Sours Larson “TinyFest expo rounds up inspiration for the ultimate in small-space living” The San Diego Union-Tribune

Daily & Online Newspapers: Business & Financial

First Place: Serena Neumeyer “‘Female Maker Market’ Takes Over Little Italy, Showcases Craft of Women Entrepreneurs” Times of San Diego

Second Place: Ken Stone "San Diego Reader Ends 52-Year Print Run, But Will Keep the Alt-Press Faith Online" Times of San Diego

Third Place: Alexander Nguyen “San Diego businesses worry about fallout from Trump's Canada-Mexico tariff threat” KPBS News

Honorable Mention: Phillip Molnar “U.S. to charge Chinese-built boats to dock at ports, including San Diego” The San Diego Union-Tribune

Daily & Online Newspapers: Column - Serious Subject

First Place: Cynthia Kosciuczyk “Oxygen Thieves” DesignerTastes.com

Judges Comment: “Speaking out against workplace bullying - brave and timely.”

Second Place: Barry M. Bloom “Baseball losing grasp of its own history in era of new rules” Sportico

Third Place: Marsha Sutton “Ethnic studies controversy” Times of San Diego

Daily & Online Newspapers: Column -Light Subject

First Place: Jim Trageser “The Sunday Special column from Lost In Cyberspace”
Lost in Cyberspace

Second Place: Alyssa Navapanich “Art with Alyssa” San Diego Family Magazine

Judges Comment: “Super fun, creative and simple.”

Third Place: Michael Gardiner (writer), Susanna Peredo Swap (editor) “Aushak with Tomato Duxelles — A Taste of the Silk Road” Vanguard Culture

Honorable Mention: Rick Griffin “‘MarketInk,’ a weekly media and marketing column, Times of San Diego” Times of San Diego

Daily & Online Newspapers: Criminal Justice

First Place: JW August and David Washburn “LaRoche, the wandering cop” Time of San Diego

Judges Comment: “What an important story to show the failures in law enforcement, which is a system meant to protect and serve the public.”

Second Place: Gabrielle Wallace “Automated license plate readers spark slew of privacy concerns in San Diego” Times of San Diego

Judges Comment: “This brings to light an area of concern for residents. It also does a great job of highlighting how the system in place can fail.”

Third Place; JW August " Commissioner: Flaws in SDPD complaint portal hinder those with accessibility, language issues " Times of San Diego

Judges Comment: “The community should thank you for your work bringing this issue to light.”

Daily & Online Newspapers: Education

First Place: Alex J. Schorr and Miriam Raftery “Recall effort launched against 4 GUHSD trustees who refuse to rescind mass firings” EastCountyMagazine.org

Judges Comment: "The massive reporting effort on this piece is evident. As an education reporter for 15+ years, I found it riveting to read. It's also well written. The two reporters on this story are truly an asset to their community. Well done."

Second Place: Staff "Free speech at issue after U-T deletes, reinstates UCSD student op-ed on Gaza" Times of San Diego

Judges Comment: "Important work, very well written, carefully stated -- this story appears to have led to accountability. Great work!"

Third Place: Kate Morrissey “National City school nurse stocks ‘Period Pantry’ to keep students in class” Daylight San Diego

Judges Comment: “One of the things I really like about this story is it uses authentic language to talk about an issue that girls in every community everywhere on earth face. It could have been a turnoff to readers, but instead feels impactful and honest. Nice work!”

Daily & Online Newspapers: Editorial

First Place: Miriam Raftery "As we celebrate Independence Day, our democracy is at risk" EastCountyMagazine.org

Daily & Online Newspapers: Election Coverage

First Place: Chris Jennewein “Times of San Diego Voter Guide” Times of San Diego

Second Place: KPBS Staff “Quiz: Where do the candidates for county supervisor stand on the issues that matter to you?” KPBS

Third Place: Miriam Raftery “What is project 2025--and how could it impact you, your family and your community?” EastCountyMagazine.org

Daily & Online Newspapers: Entertainment Reporting

First Place: George Varga “KAABOO goes kablooey: Music fest at Del Mar Fairgrounds canceled for second year in a row” San Diego Union-Tribune

Second Place: Marcia Luttrell “The Great Gatsby ballet” The San Diego Union-Tribune

Third Place: Phillip Molnar “Hollywood strikes back: San Diego Comic-Con to have major star power this year” The San Diego Union-Tribune

Honorable Mention: Cory-LaNeave Jones (writer), Susanna Peredo Swap (editor) “Behind the Scenes: Exploring the San Diego International Film Festival” Vanguard Culture

Daily & Online Newspapers: Environment

First Place: Phil Diehl “Troubled trail ahead for San Onofre's spent nuclear fuel” The San Diego Union-Tribune

Judges Comment: “Insightful and multi-layered piece. Addresses a complex topic efficiently and effectively.”

Second Place: Elisabeth Frausto “‘Highly unusual’: Coastal animals poisoned by two neurotoxins” lajolla.ca

Judges Comment: “Engaging explanation of the scope of toxic algae and its impact on aquatic life.”

Third Place: Alexander Nguyen “Research reveals how long baby sharks stay in San Diego coast nursery” KPBS News

Judges Comment: “Informative storytelling based on research findings. Grammar issue in first line”

Daily & Online Newspapers: Essay/Commentary/Opinion:

First Place: John M. Eger (writer), Susanna Peredo Swap (editor)
“COMMENTARY: Can art heal a fractured world?” Vanguard Culture

Judges Comment: "A thoughtful essay and thought-provoking essay. I wish the title weren't phrased as a question. The answer is clear: Yes, art can heal a fractured world."

Second Place : Lisa Ross “The Looming War on Federal Environmental Protections Will Hurt San Diegans”

Judges Comment: "From the vantage point of September 2025, nearly one year after this was published, this essay has, unfortunately, aged all too well. Great job."

Third Place: Jim Trageser “It (was) complicated” Lost in Cyberspace

Judges Comment: “Excellent treatment of a (yes) complicated subject for a Reds fan. As an almost-lifelong Mets fan (I'm older than the franchise) I hated Rose since he beat up Buddy. This piece really resonated. Well done.”

Honorable Mention: Alejandra Enciso Dardashti “The use of cell phones during a performance: a latent issue that is becoming more aggressive” From Another Zero

Judges Comment: “Spot on commentary about the self-involved idiots who scroll in the theatre. Maddening!”

Daily & Online Newspapers: Feature - Serious subject

First Place: Ken Stone “The Real Story of Becca Taylor’s Death: How Nevada Crash Took SD Dem Chai” Times of San Diego

Second Place: Alexander Nguyen “FBI warns of rise in 'sextortion' scams targeting teens” KPBS News

Third Place: Karen Kucher “Little things made all the difference when a plane hit a Murphy Canyon home. ‘We are alive.’” The San Diego Union-Tribune

Honorable Mention: Roberto Camacho “How Volunteer Patrols Are Working to Protect San Diego Immigrant Communities From ICE” Bolts

Daily & Online Newspapers: Feature - Light subject

First Place: Katerina Portela “Valencia Park's ‘Secret Stairs’ were left in disrepair, but the neighborhood brought it back” KPBS

Judges Comment: “Great storytelling and visuals”

Second Place: Beth Wood “Italian love story: Making music is a family affair for Francesca DeGo and Daniele Rustioni” The San Diego Union-Tribune

Judges Comment: “Great storytelling and visuals”

Third Place: Elisabeth Frausto “In print condition: DG Wills Books a treasure trove of tomes” lajolla.ca

Judges Comment: "Great pics. anyone who can use the word ""tome"" in a headline has my attention "

Daily & Online Newspapers: Food Reporting

First Place: Nicole Sours Larson “French onion soup and beyond: comfort food ‘par excellence’” The San Diego Union-Tribune

Judges Comment: "THIS is what a top-notch food feature should be! It hits some emotional and visceral moments while holding my attention and making me a little hungry, too."

Second Place: Irv Erdos “Exploits of Brooklyn aunts preparing Christmas Eve feast” San Diego Union-Tribune

Judges Comment: "Entertaining! A uniquely structured narrative, in my opinion. Well done."

Third Place: Nicole Sours Larson “Bûche de Noël: the ultimate holiday dessert” The San Diego Union-Tribune

Judges Comment: "Thorough in its reporting, and very, very visual/descriptive. The writing has personality."

Honorable Mention: Irv Erdos “Oy to the world” The San Diego Union-Tribune

Judges Comment: "Unusual entry, but that's not a bad thing! It nicely blends creative writing and journalistic writing."

Daily & Online Newspapers: Gardening

First Place: Michael James Rocha “Hollywood backyard” The San Diego Union-Tribune

Judges Comment: "Whoa, that's an eye-catching story. very cool. nicely told."

Second Place: Nicole Sours Larson "Fruitmommy, the 'fruit tree whisperer,' revitalizes ailing fruit trees" The San Diego Union-Tribune

Judges Comment: "Very informative, great pics"

Daily & Online Newspapers: Health & Medicine

First Place: Lisa Pawlak "Helpful or Harmful? What parents need to know about screen time for babies and toddlers" San Diego Family Magazine

Second Place: Jamie Reno "A Remarkable New Cancer Treatment Is Saving Lives but Scaring Some Patients" BreakingCancerNews.com

Third Place: J W August "California Families Will Face Major Care Challenges as Baby Boomers Age" Times of San Diego

Honorable Mention: Doug Brunk "What to Make of the Comorbidities Linked to Rosacea" Medscape

Daily & Online Newspapers: History

Second Place: Bill Swank "Did Dwight Eisenhower play baseball under an assumed name?" The San Diego Union-Tribune

Judges Comment: "Interesting read on little known history."

Third Place: Elisabeth Frausto "'Still here': The enduring history of La Jolla's Indigenous" lajolla.ca

Honorable Mention: Chris Stone "Carlsbad's Neil Black, 50 years after Vietnam war, on how he survived 7½ years as POW" Times of San Diego

Judges Comment: "Well written account of harrowing experience."

Daily & Online Newspapers: Military

First Place: Bill Swank "Named after Uncle Sam and Calvin Coolidge, this San Diegan was a Japanese American war hero" The San Diego Union-Tribune

Judges Comment: Interesting account of one Japanese American's treatment during World War II."

Daily & Online Newspapers: Multicultural

First Place: Lauren J. Mapp “AANHPI leaders urge San Diegans to remember community's struggles during heritage month celebrations” Daylight San Diego

Second Place: George Varga “Young music phenom D.K. Harrell lighting up the blues: ‘He has this electricity’” The San Diego Union-Tribune

Third Place: Henri Migala “Syrian community celebrates liberation of Syria”
EastCountyMagazine.org

Honorable Mention: Beth Wood “Spring Arts Preview 2025: Cellist Peter Ko is thriving at UCSD and beyond” The San Diego Union-Tribune

Daily & Online Newspapers: Political/Government

First Place: JW August “What did this politician know and when did he know it?”
Times of San Diego

Judges Comment: “Good story with impact. In-depth political reporting beneath the surface.”

Second Place: Ken Stone "Carl DeMaio selling his Rancho Bernardo home, leaving 75th District rental unit" Times of San Diego

Judges Comment: “Solid political reporting beneath the surface.”

Third Place: Ken Stone “Did DeMaio Staffer Join SD Republican Central Committee as Riverside Resident?” Times of San Diego

Daily & Online Newspapers: Profile

First Place: Rick Griffin "Profile of food blogger Darryl Gordon, who goes out to eat every night." Times of San Diego

Second Place: Marcia Luttrell “Larisa Hall Aims to Teach Dancers of all Abilities”
The San Diego Union-Tribune

Third Place: Roberto Camacho “The Empire’s Not Gone’ Analyst News

Honorable Mention: Rick Griffin “Profile of radio talk-show host Mark Larson’s fight with lymphoma.” Times of San Diego

Daily & Online Newspapers: Public Service/Consumer Advocacy

First Place: Roberto Camacho “How Volunteer Patrols Are Working to Protect San Diego Immigrant Communities From ICE” Bolts

Second Place: Calista Stocker “Public Bathrooms: San Diego Keeps Kicking the Can Down the Road” The San Diego Sun

Third Place: Miriam Raftery “Homeless people in Lemon Grove hope for dignity and homes” EastCountyMagazine.org

Daily & Online Newspapers: Real Estate

First Place: Phillip Molnar “San Diego might be having its slowest year ever for newly built housing” The San Diego Union-Tribune

Judges Comment: “Good job not only calling attention to an alarming statistic but also identifying the underlying reasons behind it.”

Daily & Online Newspapers - Reviews: Restaurant

First Place: Debra Bass “Unapologetically Blaxican: A Culinary Journey of Family, Culture, and Comfort” Edible San Diego

Judges Comment: “Yum. delicious pics. This was a tough one to score, equally attractive features.”

Second Place: Michael James Rocha “Choi’s restaurant review”

The San Diego Union-Tribune

Judges Comment: “This was a tough one to score, equally attractive features.”

Daily & Online Newspapers - Reviews: Live Performance

First Place: George Varga “Sabrina Carpenter gets fizzy with it at her flirty San Diego concert” San Diego Union-Tribune

Second Place: Noah Lyons “Foo Fighters remain triumphant at Petco Park concert, despite tragic loss” The San Diego Union-Tribune

Third Place: Cory-LaNeave Jones (writer), Susanna Peredo Swap (editor) “They Might Be Giants to Visit North Park Observatory Two Days After Mother’s Day”

Vanguard Culture

Honorable Mention: George Varga “Vocally challenged Elvis Costello snatches victory from jaws of defeat in San Diego” The San Diego Union-Tribune

Daily & Online Newspapers - Reviews: Theater

First Place: Michael James Rocha "Book of Mormon" The San Diego Union-Tribune

Second Place: Kristen Nevarez Schweizer (writer), Susanna Peredo Swap (editor) “Grit Meets Melody: SDMT’s Stripped-Down Sweeney Todd Cuts Deep” Vanguard Culture

Third Place: Mark S. Burgess “The Cast Shines in North Coast Repertory Theatre’s ‘A View from the Bridge’” SanDiegoStory.com

Honorable Mention: David Dixon “Cygnet's Latest Excels in Emotional Richness” San Diego Story

Daily & Online Newspapers: Reviews: Misc.

First Place: JW August “Murder Trial of a Black man who killed a police officer.” Times of San Diego

Second Place: Gayle Lynn Falkenthal "May 12, 2025, It Happened: Jim Lampley’s New Book Covers His Wide World of Sports” NY Fights

Third Place: Rebecca Romani “To mourn is to be human” Vanguard Culture

Daily & Online Newspapers: Science/Technology/Biotech

First Place: Elisabeth Frausto “Marine slayer: Why La Jolla’s ‘June Gloom’ exists” lajolla.ca

Second Place: Jamie Reno “Will China’s AI Breakthrough be a Game-Changer for Early Cancer Detection?” BreakingCancerNews.com

Third Place: Doug Brunk “Axolotl Offers Promise in Unlocking the Secrets of Skin Regeneration” Medscape

Honorable Mention: Jamie Reno “Pancreatic Cancer Vaccine: A Potentially Enormous Breakthrough for Patients” BreakingCancerNews.com

Daily & Online Newspapers: Sports

First Place: Alexander Nguyen “Recent deaths put spotlight on contact sports. Should kids be playing?” KPBS News

Judges Comment: "A great lede and a relatable theme of 'this could happen to me or my kid' make this story tug at the reader's heart. The mother's anguish is well-depicted, and the settlement artfully expressed as a large sum, but an amount that could never be enough, no matter how many zeros it had at the end of it."

Second Place: Ken Stone “Obituary Written for U.S. Race Walking? Or Can Americans Return to Olympics?” Times of San Diego

Judges Comment: "A very comprehensive report and metaphor for the ever-changing landscape of sports. Colorful quotes and a wide array of opinions give this piece a high degree of readability, despite the subject matter being an event that might not be everyone's first choice of sporting entertainment."

Third Place: Bill Swank "Baseball bonded 3 Japanese Americans from San Diego during, after World War II" The San Diego Union-Tribune

Judges Comment: "The story forces one to remind oneself that internment camps were not that long ago and how history is important to remember. This piece has a warm, folksy feel to it, and the Don Larsen angle links the reader to a name people know. The old news clips and black and white photos add a nice touch"

Honorable Mention: James Miller “Chula Vista teen shares a nutritionist with Dustin Poirier. Why? He’s aiming for youth MMA title” Times of San Diego

Daily & Online Newspapers: Travel – Domestic

First Place: Elaine Masters “How to Travel Smarter in the US Without a Car” TripWellGal.com

Judges Comment: "Inspired, actionable and enviro-friendly travel hacks that can be applied to a range of travel destinations "

Second Place: Lisa Gipson “Explore Kid-Friendly Slot Canyons of Arizona: Antelope Canyon” San Diego Family Magazine

Judges Comment: “Engaging travel ideas for families”

Daily & Online Newspapers: Travel – International

First Place: Kevin Brass “In Search of Costa Rica’s Most Famous Beach”
Globetrotters

Second Place: Elaine Masters "The Wondrous Evolution of Baja’s Luxury Getaway,
La Villa De Valle" TripWellGal.com

Third Place: George Varga, Beth Wood “Ahoy! Two cruise-ship virgins do Viking’s
three-river Grand European Tour” The San Diego Union-Tribune

Daily & Online Newspapers: Visual/Fine Arts Reporting

First Place: Cornelia Feye (writer), Susanna Peredo Swap (editor) “In Defense of
Nature – Joseph Beuys at the Broad Museum” Vanguard Culture

Judges Comment: "Feye unwraps the layers of history and meaning in the work of
a complex conceptual artist beautifully. At the same time, she offers thoughts of her
own that deepen the article and make it more than just a review"

Second Place: Cathy Breslaw (writer), Susanna Peredo Swap (editor) “Illuminated
Text: Greta Schödl’s Mastery at Frieze Art Fair 2025” Vanguard Culture

Judges Comment: "Breslaw did research into the artist, the technique the meaning
of the work, and introduced a new artist to readers while expressing the physical,
emotional and conceptual aspects of Greta Schodl's work."

Third Place: Rebecca Romani (writer), Susanna Peredo Swap (editor) “Wonders of
Creation: A Journey Through 13 Centuries of Islamic Art and Science” Vanguard
Culture

Judges Comment: "A comprehensive view of the exhibition, filled with details, a
walkthrough of objects and deep consideration of the thinking and inspiration
behind the show. Just what a visual/fine art review should be."

Honorable Mention: Susanna Peredo Swap “From Whimsy to the Sublime – ART:
PARIS 2025 Explores the Complexities of Human Nature” Vanguard Culture

Daily & Online Newspapers: Wildlife/Nature

First Place: Karen Kucher “‘Just bodies of animals everywhere’: Toxic algae bloom taking a toll on marine life” The San Diego Union-Tribune

Second Place : Aubrey Lloyd, Mike Hausberg, Caitlin Hannah, Sara Maher, Lisa Bissi “Hope Takes Flight” San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance

Third Place: Elyan Shor “Exceptional Trees Need Exceptional Conservation” San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance

Daily & Online Newspapers: Feature Layout Design

First Place: Kenneth Pagano The San Diego-Union Tribune

Magazines: General News

First Place: Elizabeth Marie Himchak “City agrees to remove controversial bollards on Diamond Street” PB Monthly

Magazines: Series

First Place: Andrea Naversen, Vincent Knakal, Bob Stefanko Mia Park, Chloe Pedersen “At Home with Sandra and Henny Den Uijl’ Ranch & Coast Magazine

Second Place : John Blocker, Rachel Cobb “Torrey Pines Reserve”
San Diego Floral Association

Third Place: Ron James, Mary James, Wine Dine & Travel’s “Discovery” Series
Wine Dine & Travel Magazine

Magazines: Architecture and Design

First Place: Mateo Hoke “House Music” San Diego Magazine

Second Place: Andrea Naversen, Yoshi Makino, Chloe Pedersen “Wine + Design: Bella Union” Ranch & Coast Magazine

Third Place: Andrea Naversen, Vincent Knakal, Bob Stefanko, Chloe Pedersen “On Top of the World” Ranch & Coast Magazine

Honorable Mention: Gillian Flynn, Vincent Knakal “Coming up Roses”
Ranch & Coast Magazine

Magazines: Business & Financial

First Place: Lisa Pawlak “Biz Kids: Turning Ideas into Profit” San Diego Family Magazine

Judges Comment: "Well done, informative story with good ideas and quotes from experts to back it up."

Second Place: Andrea Naversen “Maui's Comeback: Resorts and restaurants welcome chefs and tourists in the wake of wildfires” Ranch & Coast Magazine

Magazines: Column - Serious Subject

First Place: Salk Communications Office “Seeds of Change”

Salk Institute for Biological Studies

Judges Comment: "Very well done, detailed and compelling. I learned something from this and would like to learn more about it."

Second Place: Ellie Burgueno “Behind the Mask: Raising Awareness About Narcissistic Abuse” Beyond Borders Gazette

Judges Comment: "Well done, detailed piece about a subject people may not know about. Got second because first place really knocked it out of the park."

Third Place: Ron James, Mary James “Ron and Mary's Editor's Note”

Wine Dine & Travel Magazine

Judges Comment: "This is well written, and the travel issue is of concern, as we all know.”

Honorable Mention: Arlene Yang, Ben Koh, Lorena Slomanson" “Why I Lawyer”
San Diego County Bar Association

Magazines: Column - Light Subject

First Place: George W. Brewster “The Rewind” San Diego County Bar Association

Judges comment: "Entry includes a Very humorous and slightly thought-provoking rant with a strong personality (What It Isn't), and a well-researched bio that holds the reader's interest (Marie Herney Trailblazer.)"

Second Place: Andrea Naversen, Adrienne Alpert “Andrea Naversen Wait”

Ranch & Coast Magazine

Judges Comment: "Columnist’s final Letter from the Editor weaves glimpses of past & present Christmases in a deeply personal, engaging way."

Third Place: "Dr. Sabrina Falquier, Jen Lo "Seasonal Superfoods - Winter, Spring and Summer" Edible San Diego

Judges Comment: "Useful info is presented in a clear, inviting way."

Magazines: Criminal Justice

First Place: Cathy Scott "Remembering Voletta Wallace, Mother of Rapper Biggie Smalls" Psychology Today

Second Place: Cathy Scott “Five Cold Cases Solved in 2024 Because of New Technology” Psychology Today

Magazines: Education

First Place: Lisa Pawlak “The Importance of Storytelling: How reading supports SEL” San Diego Family Magazine

Judges Comment: "This is well researched and well written. It editorializes a tiny little bit, but it's all in the scope of exploring an educational concept. I enjoyed reading this."

Second Place: Jeff Bettger, Kim Skulavik, Eddie Flores “Meet Your Neighbors: The Arancibia Family” The Towne Local Bonita

Judges Comment: “This lively profile of an impactful local couple/family was uplifting and thoughtful.”

Third Place: Rafael Hurtado “Making a Difference in the Community...and Beyond”

San Diego County Bar Association

Judges Comment: "This doesn't feel like a traditional magazine article, but I think that's okay in this case. It was compelling and I came away with an understanding of an impactful program."

Honorable Mention: Taneashia R. Morrell “The Path to Progress: Why Diversity Strengthens and Drives Innovation” San Diego County Bar Association

Magazines: Entertainment Reporting

First Place: Melanie Maxwell “The 37th Catalina Island JazzTrax Festival Smooth Jazz News”

Judges Comment: "Challenging category to score, equally deserving"

Second Place: Jim Trageser “Cindy Lee Berryhill Comes Full Circle”

San Diego Troubadour

Judges Comment: "Challenging category to score, equally deserving"

Magazines: Environment

First Place: Amanda Cavallari, Lisa Gipson “Suburban Homesteading: How to practice sustainable living in San Diego” San Diego Family Magazine

Second Place: Deanna Murphy “Win-Win Conservation” Ranch & Coast Magazine

Magazines: Essay/Commentary/Opinion

First Place: Nicolle Monico “The Age of Earnestness” San Diego Magazine

Second Place: Nicole D'Ambrogi “Inclusion Beyond Appearances: A Call to Action for the Legal Community” San Diego County Bar Association

Third Place: Jeff Bettger, Kim Skulavik “Letter from The Editor: Graduations”

The Towne Local Bonita

Magazines: Feature - Serious subject

First Place: Lisa Pawlak “Technoference: How technology harms parent-child relationships” San Diego Family Magazine

Second Place: Deanna Murphy "Vision, Work, and Impact" Ranch & Coast Magazine

Third Place: Elaine Masters “How Bob Dylan and Timothée Chalamet Helped Heal a Rift with My Son” [TripWellGal.com](https://www.tripwellgal.com)

Magazines: Feature: Light subject

First Place: Lisa Gipson “How to Have a Retro Summer” San Diego Family Magazine

Second Place: Lauren J. Mapp, Lauren Di Matteo “Food Forestry - Partnering with the trees that nourish us” Edible San Diego

Magazines: Food Reporting

First Place: Mateo Hoke “Fish Farm to Table” San Diego Magazine

Judges Comment: "A breathtaking work of journalism. This is so in-depth and intriguing, well written and well edited, and sophisticated overall. It stands out above the rest in a very competitive category of food writing entries. I'm an award-winning food writer myself, and I bow to this journalist. Incredible"

Second Place: Nathalie Taylor “Savvy Macs - Bringing Color and Flavor to the World Through Macarons” Sourcebook Magazine

Judges Comment: "This is a really special story. It hits the right mark between "food story" and "business profile," and answers a lot of questions I didn't know I had about macarons. Well done."

Third Place: Bill Abrams, Donald Miralle “Bad Boyz of Culinary” Ranch & Coast Magazine

Judges Comment: "This story checks many of the boxes I look for in an award-worthy food story: a unique hook, excellent writing, and a sense that I learned either something new or how to appreciate something new (in this case, this story accomplished both of those things. Nice work!"

Honorable Mention: Danielle Allaire “Campestre Harvest Report 2024”
Edible San Diego

Judges Comment: "This category was so hard to judge because every entry was great. This piece was enjoyable and nicely written in a style that pushes some envelopes. The illustrations were great, too."

Magazines: Gardening

First Place: Peggy Scott “The Night Life: Plants That Bloom in the Dark” San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance

Second Place: Kenise Adams “From Seed to Soil” Edible San Diego

Third Place: John Blocker, Nancy Carol Carter, Rachel Cobb, Thea Gurns, Lee Somerville “In the Garden; San Diego Floral Association

Honorable Mention: John Blocker, Nancy Carol Carter, Rachel Cobb, Thea Gurns, Lee Somerville "California Garden, September/October 2024 • Volume 115, Number 5" San Diego Floral Association

Magazines: Health & Medicine

First Place: Jeff Bettger, Kim Skulavik, Kenric Martinez" “Horses Helping Humans” The Towne Local Bonita

Judges Comment: “This was a very thorough article on horse assisted therapy and its benefits.”

Second Place: Annie Pierce “Leading the Way With Care” UC San Diego Health

Judges Comment: “Detailed, compelling article on the benefits of UC San Diego Health. Good patient examples”

Third Place: Scripps Research Communications Office “Scripps Research Magazine – Winter 2025” Scripps Research

Judges Comment: "A well done magazine but the entry did not focus on one story or feature, as the other entries did, so it wasn't clear what story I should pick to use as the main story to compare to the others. I would recommend to the editors they pick one story to focus on for next year."

Honorable Mention: Jim Trageser “X-Linked Carriers: What Everyone Needs to Know” IG Living

Judges Comment: "This was a very detailed explanation, bordering on being a piece for a scientific journal, but it could have benefited from some real-life examples/quotes from people impacted."

Magazines: History

First Place: Eric DuVall “A Page from History: Story of OB's little library is beginning a new chapter” Ocean Beach Historical Society

Second Place: Andrea Naversen “Soak up the Sun and History on Catalina” Ranch & Coast Magazine

Third Place: Andrea Naversen, Vincent Knakal, Bob Stefanko, Mia Park, Chloe Pedersen Transformation of a Treasured Landmark” Ranch & Coast Magazine

Honorable Mention: George W. Brewster “The Courthouse Clock: A Timely Tale” San Diego County Bar Association

Magazines: Military

First Place: Bill Abrams “Elevating Military Families” Ranch & Coast Magazine

Judges Comment: "As a navy veteran, I am an instant fan of this piece. This was a tough category to score, both features equally deserving as a navy veteran, I am an instant fan of this piece"

Second Place: Andrea Naversen “Tour of Honor” Ranch & Coast Magazine

Judges Comment: "As a navy veteran, I am an instant fan of this piece. This was a tough category to score, both features equally deserving"

Magazines: Multicultural

First Place: Tarina Mand “A Story of Caste Discrimination in America” San Diego County Bar Association

Judges Comment: "Well-written, compelling piece about an issue. I had no idea this was still so concerning."

Second Place: Lauren J. Mapp, Becka Vance “Reconnecting with Ancestral Lands through Agriculture” Edible San Diego

Judges Comment: "Well-done piece, touching on multiple important issues. Looking forward to reading more about the farm as it grows and the next steps the tribe will be taking."

Magazines: Political/Government

First Place: Judge Dana M. Sabraw “Judicial Independence: The Rule of Law and Our Democracy Depend on It” San Diego County Bar Association

Second Place: Maria C. Chavez “Preparing for the New Practice of Immigration Law” San Diego County Bar Association

Magazines: Profile

First Place: Jim Trageser “Stoney B: I’m Not Going to Run Away from the Name Blues” Living Blues

Second Place: Jim Trageser “Tee Dee Young: Icon of the Lexington Blues Scene” Living Blues

Third Place: Ryan Rizzuto, Adriana Delgado “Field Notes with Ellee Igoe” Edible San Diego

Honorable Mention: Elizabeth Marie Himchak "Rick Aguilar returns to SDPD's Northern Division, this time as its captain" PB Monthly

Magazines: Public Service/Consumer Advocacy

First Place: Linda St. Angelo Burritt “Inside the Autistic Mind: Understanding a spectrum of sensory differences” Flourishing Families

Second Place: Amanda Cavallari “Summer Safety: Preparation is Everything” San Diego Family Magazine

Third Place: Linda St. Angelo Burritt “Make Safety a Priority: Tips and tools to keep loved ones safe at home and away” Flourishing Families

Honorable Mention: Scott Pirrello “How San Diego Combats Elder Abuse” San Diego County Bar Association

Magazines: Real Estate

First Place: Gillian Flynn “Super Natural” Ranch & Coast Magazine

Magazines: Reviews: Restaurant

First Place: Brandon Hernandez, Vincent Knakal “Le Coq de la Promenade” Ranch
& Coast Magazine

Judges Comment: "Attractive photos, good read"

Second Place: Beth Demmon, Lauren Di Matteo “An Anchor of San Diego Dining”
Edible San Diego

Judges Comment: "I'm a fan of the story, but not of the layout. excellent pictures,
but there's a lot of copy on the page. I would have increased the photo size and
spread that story onto another two pages."

Third Place: Ron James, Mary James “Lima’s hot new generation of restaurants”
Wine Dine & Travel Magazine

Judges Comment: “I loved the interactive portion. sans serif is a difficult font to
read for many people.”

Honorable Mention: Nathalie Taylor “Backdraft Bar & Grill - Comfort Food in a
Neighborhoodly Atmosphere” Sourcebook Magazine

Magazines: Reviews: Theater

First Place: ErinMarie Reiter “‘Sweeney Todd: The demon barber of Fleet Street’ at
San Diego Musical Theatre” Talk Theatre To Me

Second Place: ErinMarie Reiter “A Streetcar Named Desire - Backyard
Renaissance” Talk Theatre To Me

Third Place: ErinMarie Reiter “What the Constitution Means To Me - North Coast
Repertory Theatre” Talk Theatre To Me

Magazines: Reviews: Misc.

First Place: Jim Trageser “Sunshine of Your Love—Peter Sprague Plays Cream”
San Diego Troubadour

Second Place: Jim Trageser “Notes from the Road by Robert Mugge Living Blues

Third Place: Jeanne Ferris “Rez Ball: Film review” News From Native California

Magazines: Science/Technology/Biotech

First Place: Salk Communications Office “Inside Salk Fall 2024”

Salk Institute for Biological Studies

Judges Comment: "From a magazine perspective, this issue is very well done. Engaging and detailed and works for a wide audience (not just scientists). I liked the themed concept on the cover and the use of illustrations throughout. Stories (main feature) tie in the personal connection to the science, which helps humanize the process."

Second Place: Scripps Research Communications Office “Catalyst: The Science Issue Winter 2025” Scripps Research

Judges Comment: "This is well done. Energizing design, crisp writing. Overall, though, it presents more like a scientific journal than a magazine. Didn't have the connections/emotional tie in to topics as the first-place entry."

Third Place: Lisa Pawlak “Up and Atom! How to raise a STEM-savvy student”

San Diego Family Magazine

Judges Comment: This is well written but lacks back up for the suggestions and examples of children who have benefited or followed the suggestions within it.

Magazines: Sports

First Place: Deanna Murphy “Driven” Ranch & Coast Magazine

Judges Comment: "Compelling, trailblazing, against-the-odds type of story is always appealing, especially when it is well-written - as this one is. The piece is enhanced by the diverse and effective photo gallery."

Magazines: Travel – Domestic

First Place: Nicolle Monico “Still Wild” San Diego Magazine

Judges Comment: "A real traveler’s travelogue, giving the reader a taste of what it would like to be there, not only now, but decades and centuries ago. Excellent, sepia-toned photos complemented the piece, and it did a great job of extolling Jackson Hole as something more than just a ski resort, weaving history and conservationism smoothly."

Second Place: Elizabeth Hansen, Richard Adams "Getting Into Training, And Exploring Downtown Los Angeles" Ranch & Coast Magazine

Judges Comment: "Enjoyable piece about not only the destination but also the slightly less common way of getting there. Well-written and insightful information about places not necessarily well-documented in L.A. The food described sounded great and this could almost have doubled as a restaurant review, but in a good way."

Third Place: Joe Yogerst "Grand Canyon pit stop is now a bona fide hot spot" Joe Yogerst

Judges Comment: "Between the copy, the photos and the video, the reader certainly is presented with everything he or she needs to know about the resurgence of Flagstaff. The Grand Canyon, as prominent and famous as it is, was largely ignored and I think that worked and was purposeful. If looking at stars is your thing, the piece does compel you to visit."

Magazines: Travel – International

First Place: Ron James, Mary James "Discovering Scotland"

Wine Dine & Travel Magazine

Judges Comment: "Well described but never overwrought, a nicely done travelogue of the Scottish Highlands and Islands. As it seems most of the excursion was beset by not just rain, but sideways and wind-swept downpours, the writers did a good job of mixing that in as an inconvenient yet charming character in their adventure. Many of the mountain-shrouded photos were other-worldly but became somewhat one-note towards the end. Nice job on the waterfall photo...not an easy shot, especially in rough conditions"

Second Place: Elizabeth Hansen, Richard Adams "San Miguel de Allende"

Ranch & Coast Magazine

Judges Comment: "A succinct but well-written piece with dazzling photos (especially the cover shot). The writer also presented a nice touch of history about the first ex-pats to establish themselves in San Miguel de Allende but transitioned smoothly as to what a present-day traveler can do - and of course eat - while there."

Third Place: Ron James "Discovering Thailand" Wine Dine & Travel Magazine

Judges Comment: "A nice job on not only detailing an exotic and varied experience that is Thailand but also weaving in the inheriting of a new travel family. Pictures we are stunning of not only the golden and giant temples and statues, but also in the villages."

Honorable Mention: Tom Gable "African Trifecta -- Serengeti, Rwanda, and Masai Mara" Wine, Dine and Travel Magazine

Magazines: Wildlife/Nature

First Place: Joe Yogerst "The Secret World of Canada's Coastal Wolves" Joe Yogerst

Magazines: Drawing or Illustration

First Place: George W. Brewster Fees—A Parody of the Trees"

San Diego County Bar Association

Judges Comment: "This illustration fits the style, and illustrates the point of the column it accompanies in a creative way."

Second Place: Amy Blandford "Wildlife Care" San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance

Judges Comment: "In a clear, inviting style for children, each of several integrated scenes shows a specific example of what the accompanying text covers."

Third Place: Amy Blandford "Meerkat Mob" San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance

Magazines: Front Page Design

First Place: Vincent Knakal, Bob Stefanko, Chloe Pedersen, Mia Park "September 2024" Front Cover Ranch & Coast Magazine

Judges Comment: "I love the motion of this and the colors"

Second Place: Vincent Knakal, Bob Stefanko, Chloe Pedersen "February 2025" Front Cover Ranch & Coast Magazine

Judges Comment: "Nice, very classic"

Third Place: Dwight Huang Summer 2025" Cover Edible San Diego

Judges Comment: "Simple, yet I appreciate it very much"

Honorable Mention: Rik Thiesfeld, Michele Hancock, Christianne Dowd
Front cover of Flourishing Families Flourishing Families

Judges Comment: “What a fun cover!”

Magazines: Feature Layout Design

First Place: Chloe Pedersen, Vincent Knakal “Best Restaurants: Readers' Choice”
Ranch & Coast Magazine

Judges Comment: "Each layout was more stunning than the next. It's not just the photography but the elegance and simplicity of the pages that complemented the pictures, which of course were excellent. Even the consistency and purposefulness of the fonts impressed. Very Lovely Work."

Second Place: Chloe Pedersen, Gillian Flynn “Bright Ideal” Ranch & Coast
Magazine

Judges Comment: "The text within one of the pages mentioned a 'come hither' quality, and that is what these entries did as well. Appealing architectural photos anchored by the props in the center were very tastefully done and quite pleasing to the eye."

Third Place: Peggy Scott Headline compilation San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance

Judges Comment: Wildlife and drone photography put together in an aesthetically pleasing and simple way made each of these handsome and eye-catching. Especially like the gravel-covered lizard!”

Honorable Mention: Oliver Yambao “Seeds of Change” Salk Institute for
Biological Studies

Non-Daily Newspapers: Breaking News

First Place: Scott Hopkins “Student arrested for bringing pellet gun to PLHS game”
Times of San Diego

Judges Comment: "Strong, concise writing."

Non-Daily Newspapers: General News

First Place: Regina Elling “Backcountry women ranchers maintain legacies while embracing the future” Ramona Sentinel

Judges Comment: "Well-told story about women in ranching. Strong narrative, good attention to detail (e.g., smaller vaccine guns that are easier for women to hold and use.) Great job"

Second Place: Regina Elling "As prices rise, egg producers and restaurant owners in Ramona make adjustments" Ramona Sentinel

Judges Comment: “Good examination of the impacts of the nationwide egg shortage created by avian flu on ordinary business people.”

Third Place: Denis Grasska Pope Leo Is 'One of Us' The Southern Cross

Judges Comment: “Nice reaction piece to the elevation of Cardinal Robert Prevost to the papacy.”

Honorable Mention: Luke Harold “State housing agency: Del Mar still must upzone bluffside properties if fairgrounds plan fails” Del Mar Times

Judges Comment: “Clear treatment of complex subject.”

Non-Daily Newspapers: Investigative Reporting

Honorable Mention: Macy Meinhardt “Rent Hikes, Neglect and Evictions Grip Blackstone Tenants ” San Diego Voice & Viewpoint

Non-Daily Newspapers: Series

First Place: Macy Meinhardt “Toxic Culture, Failing Students: Inside the Harriet Tubman Village Charter Crisis" San Diego Voice & Viewpoint

Judges Comment: “Well reported and written series on a troubled school. Excellent work.”

Non-Daily Newspapers: Architecture and Design

First Place: Ray Huard “Swinerton Finishing \$500M Hotel Del Renovation” San Diego Business Journal

Judges Comment: “Engaging balance of architecture and history.”

Second Place: Julie Gallant “Crowd cheers as Ramona archway centerpiece is unveiled on Halloween” Ramona Sentinel

Judges Comment: “Lively story celebrating the design and unveiling of the archway”

Third Place: Ray Huard “US Grant Hotel Gets \$4M Facelift” San Diego Business Journal

Judges Comment: “Interesting insight into preservation and detective work to maintain history.”

Non-Daily Newspapers: Business & Financial

First Place: Julie Gallant “Ramona couple's 180-degree flashlight to be featured on 'Shark Tank'” Ramona Sentinel

Second Place: Brad Graves “A Boost for Shipbuilders: Bill Calls for More U.S. Cargo Vessels” San Diego Business Journal

Third Place: Madison Geering “Market-Style Retail Provides Functional Solution to Retail Vacancies” San Diego Business Journal

Honorable Mention: Karen Billing “Encinitas fashion designer building luxury brand with ROMUSE” Encinitas Advocate

Non-Daily Newspapers: Column - Serious Subject

First Place: Carlos Davalos “From the Editor” The Star-News

Judges Comment: "Succinctly written. Opinion is clear and strong, which is refreshing."

Second Place: Marsha Sutton "Education Matters: Settlement reached, details vague and the (almost) final chapter in SDUHSD saga" Del Mar Times

Judges Comment: "Persistence pays off. And, as this writer demonstrates, persistence is mandatory when making record requests to agencies that don't want to comply.”

Third Place: Lisa Ross “A View From The Chair” Sierra Club San Diego Chapter

Judges Comment: “Column about coping with the wildfire and its impacts was very moving.”

Non-Daily Newspapers: Column - Light Subject

First Place: Wayne Chan “Wayne's World” San Diego Union Tribune/Chieftain

Judges Comment: "Columns about married life are rather rare these days, so these pieces seem sort of quaint. (I mean this in a nice way.) These were entertaining, fun, and funny. Nice to know it's still ok to poke fun of ourselves, our spouses, and The Institution."

Second Place: Carlos Davalos “From the Editor” The Star-News

Judges Comment “Nice touch with this column, which features wry observations about ordinary life in extraordinary times.

Non-Daily Newspapers: Criminal Justice

First Place: Elizabeth Marie Himchak “Friends & Family Community Connection disbanded after embezzlement” Rancho Bernardo News Journal

Judges Comment: "Good job shining a light on the criminal activity that led to the downfall of an organization pursuing a valuable purpose. When it comes to public records access, persistence is the name of the game. Good for you (and your readers!)"

Non-Daily Newspapers: Education

First Place: Elizabeth Marie Himchak “Tiny house built by PUSD students goes up for auction” Rancho Bernardo News Journal

Judges Comment: "Awesome story -- it checks all the boxes I look for in an award-winning piece. Well structured. The crisp, clean language and great context make this very enjoyable to read. This is the clear winner in this category."

Second Place: Regina Elling “Peighton the therapy dog spreads pawsitivity at Ramona school” Ramona Sentinel

Judges Comment: “Strong story with great context and detail. The writing evokes emotion and hits home -- I think we can all use a visit from this therapy dog.”

Third Place: Julie Gallant “Funding cut for new Poway Unified program for students with disabilities” Poway News Chieftain

Judges Comment: “Nice reporting on an important topic that has both local and national appeal at the same time. I appreciated the lede of this story as one of the strongest ledes in this category overall.”

Honorable Mention: Julie Gallant “Poway elementary students help pilot comic book that teaches kids about hunger” Poway News Chieftain

Judges Comment: “Cute story that goes beyond the cuteness to talk about the bigger picture! Nicely done.”

Non-Daily Newspapers: Editorial

First Place: Jess Levy “No Passport Needed” Carlsbad Chamber of Commerce

Non-Daily Newspapers: Election Coverage

First Place: Luke Harold “Judge orders change to SDUHSD candidate’s ‘false and misleading’ ballot designation” Del Mar Times

Judges Comment: "Interesting examination of a very local election issue, of the type typically overlooked by larger media. Good job shining a light on this."

Second Place: Macy Meinhardt “Local Narratives Behind the 2024 Black Male Vote” San Diego Voice & Viewpoint

Judges Comment: Good analysis piece with a local focus.

Third Place: Ina von Ber “Food fight for the White House-- Kamala’s Doritos vs. Donald’s burgers? Who will feed America?” Ambassadorial Roundtable

Non-Daily Newspapers: Entertainment Reporting

First Place: Sande Lollis “Cathryn Beeks: Cain't Nothin' Ever Keep Her Down”
EDGE OF A PLANET MUSIC HOUSE

Second Place: Regina Elling "Inspired by Ramona mentors, musician Benjamin McCarthy pays it forward" Ramona Sentinel

Third Place: Michael J. Williams “Longtime friends from Torrey Pines High collaborate on feature film” Carmel Valley News

Honorable Mention: Elizabeth Marie Himchak "Noel Paul Stookey — of Peter, Paul and Mary — comes to RB" Rancho Bernardo News Journal

Non-Daily Newspapers: Essay/Commentary/Opinion

First Place: Charles Carr "A.I. is changing the way we think -- and not for the better" Charles Carr

Non-Daily Newspapers: Feature - Serious subject

First Place: Karen Billing "Niam's Run for Kids with Cancer raises \$33,000 for Leukemia & Lymphoma Society" Carmel Valley News

Judges Comment: "Great call-to-action story with nice, human connection photos."

Second Place: Scott Hopkins "Tragic crash ends former Pointer star's athletic career" Times of San Diego

Judges Comment: "Sad way to learn a lesson, glad to see she's able to use it as a teachable moment for others. well written."

Third Place: Elizabeth Marie Himchak "Celebration of Courage shines spotlight on domestic violence" Rancho Bernardo News Journal

Judges Comment: "Good story. strange, random bolded formatting made it difficult to read."

Non-Daily Newspapers: Feature - Light subject

First Place: Scott Hopkins "Family, neighbors welcome back Point Loma Olympian" Times of San Diego

Judges Comment: "Tacos. of course. I felt like I was there for his homecoming. great storytelling and pics."

Second Place: Xiomara Gerardo "Pastor put families, migrants on path to healing" The Star-News

Judges Comment: "Xiomara, you're a great storyteller. looks like you are skilled at digging down to reach people in the community and tell their stories."

Third Place: Aida Bustos "Parishioners Dancing to Better Health" The Southern Cross"

Judges Comment: “Fun, upbeat story. great pics. nice call-to-action.”

Honorable Mention: Denis Grasska “Young Saint' Inspires Home for Catholic Youth” The Southern Cross

Judges Comment: "Nice story, great pictures. I like the human-interest story, digging in the community to share great things happening."

Non-Daily Newspapers: Food Reporting

First Place: Catharine Kaufman “A feast for the eyes: Best foods to boost your ocular health” Del Mar Times

Judges Comment: "This was really intriguing! This is clear, crisp, smart, and helpful writing. Great job."

Second Place: Elizabeth Marie Himchak “Rancho Bernardo to-go senior meal program going strong” Rancho Bernardo News Journal

Judges Comment: "Overall, a really nice story. It held my interest and went beyond the surface of the topic at hand.”

Non-Daily Newspapers: Gardening

First Place: Karen Billing “Del Mar Heights School garden grows on new campus”
Del Mar Times

Judges Comment: "This story captures the fun, delight and education a school garden provides."

Second Place: Elizabeth Marie Himchak “Bernardo Gardeners spring tour to provide lots of inspiration” Rancho Bernardo News Journal

Judges Comment: “This garden tour advance article makes me want to go.”

Non-Daily Newspapers: Health & Medicine

First Place: Elizabeth Marie Himchak “RB man hopes his autobiography will inspire others with medical challenges” Rancho Bernardo News Journal

Second Place: Charles Carr “Easy ways you can reduce your exposure to harmful microplastics TODAY” Charles Carr

Non-Daily Newspapers: Humor

Honorable Mention: Charles Carr “Remembering a Far From Perfect Father”
Charles Carr

Non-Daily Newspapers: Multicultural

First Place: Ray Huard “\$155M City Heights Refugee Campus Planned San Diego
Business Journal”

Second Place: Ray Huard “Balboa Park Pavilion Celebrates Cross-Border Ties” San
Diego Business Journal

Third Place: Regina Elling “560 acres near Ramona returned to Mesa Grande tribe
as part of 'Land Back' movement” Ramona Sentinel

Non-Daily Newspapers: Profile

First Place: Karen Billing Food Network’s ‘Harry Potter Wizards of Baking’ features
cake artist Carmel Valley News

Judges Comment: "Altfest’s gluten-free baking journey, presented clearly & in
great detail, includes quotes & descriptive language that vividly bring her candid,
enthusiastic personality to life. Lots of skill went into making profile so much fun to
read."

Second Place: Macy Meinhardt “Emerald Hills’ Martha Abraham’s Fight for
Justice in Southeastern San Diego” San Diego Voice & Viewpoint

Judges Note: "The profile gives a solid, clear overview of Abraham’s life and goals,
while doing it in a way that the reader can get a real feeling for Abraham as a person.

Third Place: Elizabeth Marie Himchak “Northeastern's new police captain began
his career there 30 years ago” Rancho Bernardo News Journal

Honorable Mention: Denis Grasska “Deacon Bob’ Made History 50 Years Ago”
The Southern Cross

Non-Daily Newspapers: Public Service/Consumer Advocacy

First Place: Regina Elling Food aid programs are stepping up efforts in Ramona as the need increases Ramona Sentinel

Non-Daily Newspapers: Real Estate

First Place: Macy Meinhardt "23 Homes, a Footnote and a Fight Over Park Space " San Diego Voice & Viewpoint

Judges Comment: "An engaging explanation of an issue that could have otherwise made for a dull read."

Second Place: Ray Huard "Community Groups Promote New Vision for Downtown Civic Center" San Diego Business Journal

Judges Comment: "A thorough and easy to understand explanation of a monumental vision."

Third Place: Julie Gallant "North Coast Church plans a 20,330-square-foot campus in Ramona" Ramona Sentinel

Judges Comment: "Appreciate the effort that went into bringing all this information together."

Non-Daily Newspapers: Reviews: Restaurant

First Place: Nathalie Taylor "So-Cal Chef Open – "A triumph!" Village News

Judges Comment: "Delicious looking pics. nice descriptions and quotes."

Second Place: Nathalie Taylor "Indulge in delightful culinary creations at the San Diego County Fair!" Village News

Judges Comment: "Yum. and ramen taco...as a foodie, now I have to know what this magic is. good use of descriptions and photos."

Non-Daily Newspapers: Reviews: Theater

First Place: Lynne Friedmann "A View from the Bridge, North Coast Repertory Theatre" CultureVulture.net

Judges Comment: "Well written, great pics. This was a tough category to score. All were equally as good."

Second Place: ErinMarie Reiter “REGENCY GIRLS at The Old Globe” Talk Theatre
To Me

Third Place: ErinMarie Reiter “3 SUMMERS OF LINCOLN at La Jolla Playhouse”
Talk Theatre To Me

Non-Daily Newspapers: Reviews: Misc.

First Place: Julie Gallant “The Death of Us All' celebrates nun who died protecting
Amazon rainforest” Poway News Chieftain

Judges Comment: "Fascinating topic, I was interested in Stang from the beginning
and would definitely like to read this book now."

Non-Daily Newspapers: Science/Technology/Biotech

First Place: Brad Graves “Building a Lunar Economy” San Diego Business Journal

Second Place: Ray Huard “Venter Institute Moves Downtown” San Diego Business
Journal

Non-Daily Newspapers: Sports

First Place: Phillip Brents “Cross country season ends on All-American note for
Eastlake’s Williams” Integrity Newspapers

Second Place: Scott Hopkins "After dropping first game, Pointer baseball rolls to
another CIF title" Times of San Diego

Third Place: Scott Hopkins “Dramatic win gives Pointers another CIF soccer
championship” Times of San Diego

Honorable Mention: Phillip Brents "CIF girls flag football titles go to Olympian,
Mater Dei Catholic" Integrity Newspapers

Non-Daily Newspapers: Travel - Domestic

First Place: Nathalie Taylor “Pala Mission – 208 years of history” Village News

Non-Daily Newspapers: Travel – International

First Place: Nathalie Taylor “Once upon a time in Sweden” Village News

Non-Daily Newspapers: Visual/Fine Arts Reporting

First Place: Julie Gallant “Japanese artist combines graphic arts and nature in Poway exhibit” Poway News Chieftain

Judges Comment: "Gallant's piece gives the reader a strong sense of both the artist and the work, bringing her subject to life."

Second Place: Elizabeth Marie Himchak “Rancho Bernardo Library exhibit features artist's 'Personal Connections'” Rancho Bernardo News Journal

Non-Daily Newspapers: Front Page Design

First Place: Edgar Rodriguez Carlsbad Chamber of Commerce

Non-Daily Newspapers: Feature Layout Design

First Place: Edgar Rodriguez Carlsbad Chamber of Commerce

Second Place: Aida Bustos, Shelly Pinomaki “You Are Not Alone” The Southern Cross

Photography – Still: News

First Place: Charlie Neuman "We Must Speak Up” The Southern Cross

Judges Comment: “A brilliant choice to resist the temptation of shooting this low. Going high gave it the impact of the crowd size. The formation of the hands of the couple in the front is striking. Fabulous work.”

Second Place: Chris Stone “Fights in the Snapdragon stands after SDFC victory” Times of San Diego

Judges Comment: “The photographer was Johnny-on-the-spot and that is half the battle. Anger in the subject's face and jawbone are the epicenter of this photo. Great job!”

Third Place: Leonardo Enrique Fonseca “Real Presence” The Southern Cross

Judges Comment: "I get the 'beacon of light' symbolism, but the subject is a little too far away, and the audience in the background could stand to be a little more exposed. Otherwise, a very fine piece of work."

Honorable Mention: Chris Stone "Memorial Day 2025 in San Diego" Times of San Diego

Judges Comment: "Well composed, but colors seem faded and photo quality not as high as it should be."

Photography – Still: Feature - Serious Subject

First Place: David Maung "Rite" The Southern Cross

Judges Comment: "I can see the swinging motion and hear the service."

Second Place: David Maung "Gift" The Southern Cross

Judges Comment: "What a peaceful image, the offering"

Third Place: David Maung "Tradition" The Southern Cross

Judges Comment: "Captured the moment well. I would have loved a closer view or slightly different angle, but overall, well done"

Photography – Still: Feature - Light Subject

First Place: Andy Hayt "Warm Respite" The Southern Cross

Judges Comment: "Great composition, color, light"

Second Place: Thom Vollenweider "Misty River Crossing" San Diego Union Tribune

Judges Comment: "Gorgeous colors. The movement is inviting."

Third Place: Criselda Yee "One kite chaser actually goes airborne in his quest for the tail." Union-Tribune Community Press

Judges Comment: "Whoa! what a shot."

Honorable Mention: Nathalie Taylor "Cottages sit at the edge of the Baltic Sea" Village News

Judges Comment: "Great colors, love the mirroring"

Photography – Still: Sports

First Place: P.J. Panebianco “Michael Harrison breaks a tackle against New Mexico” East Village Times

Judges Comment: “The flying dirt and the lack of noise in difficult lighting and a well-managed background are a few of the elements that make it great”

Second Place: P.J. Panebianco “Zane Kelly with the catch in center field”
East Village Times

Judges Comment: "A risky but ultimately successful composition. The signature on the wall in the background gives it a baseball feel, plus the ball is just hitting the mitt and thus visible. Very Nice."

Third Place: Thom Vollenweider “Chasing A Loose Ball” San Diego Union Tribune

Judges Comment: "Very well composed and the intensity of the faces is what makes this photo as good as it is. Tough lighting conditions, yes, but the photo loses a point or two for noise."

Honorable Mention: Chris Stone "Muratalla, Navarrete win Pechanga main events" Times of San Diego

Judges Comment: "Boxing is so photogenic, so a photo in this arena must really be superlative to win. This one is good, but the composition between the ropes is slightly distracting, and the shadow on the fighter’s face on the right side is bad luck"

Photography – Still: Photo Essay

First Place: Chris Stone San Diego's Susan G. Komen 3-Day Walk 2024 Times of San Diego

Second Place: Chris Stone San Diego Rodeo at Petco Park highlight images Times of San Diego

Third Place: Chris Stone "Muratalla, Navarrete win Pechanga main events"
Times of San Diego

Honorable Mention: Sal Giametta FACES & PLACES: Comic-Con Friday 2024
The San Diego Sun

Judges Comment: “So bright and colorful. I really wanted to see their whole costumes.”

Photography – Still: Portrait

First Place: Chris Stone "Muratalla, Navarrete win Pechanga main events"
Times of San Diego

Judges Comment: “I can hear and smell this picture.”

Second Place: Chris Stone “Faces of Spirit of '45 at Liberty Station” Times of San Diego

Judges Comment: “His face tells lifetimes of stories.”

Third Place: Lauren Di Matteo “Noris Velasquez and heritage wheat” Edible San Diego

Honorable Mention: Thom Vollenweider Twins' Senior Portraits
The San Diego Union Tribune

Photography – Video: News

First Place: Dominique Lavigne, Michael Saucedo “OB Apartment Fire”
FOX 5 San Diego

Judges Comment: “Very simple and touching story.”

Second Place: Chris Stone, Ken Stone “Highlights of San Diego 'No Kings' rally and march” Times of San Diego

Honorable Mention: Macy Meinhardt, Tihut Tamrat “Do you Hear Us?’ Encanto Residents Push Back Against Unchecked Housing Development” San Diego Voice & Viewpoint

Photography – Video: Feature - Serious subject

First Place: Brendan Cleak “How Scientists are Preparing for a Possible H5N1 Pandemic” Scripps Research

Second Place: Jennifer Franco, Michael Saucedo “Stolen Wigs” FOX 5 San Diego

Third Place: Macy Meinhardt; Tihut Tamrat “Do you Hear Us?’ Encanto Residents Push Back Against Unchecked Housing Development” San Diego Voice & Viewpoint

Honorable Mention: Aaron Howard Salk's transformative discovery social media video Salk Institute for Biological Studies

Photography – Video: Feature - Light subject

First Place: Brendan Cleak “Graduation Day 2025” Scripps Research Scripps Research

Second Place: Elaine Masters “Bowling Ball Beach” TripWellGal.com

Third Place: Michael Saucedo, Sarah Alegre “Migrants Attempt to board School Bus” FOX 5 San Diego

Honorable Mention: Elaine Masters “The Empress of the Deep” TripWellGal.com

Photography – Video: Photo Essay

First Place: Michael Saucedo Petco Park Rodeo FOX 5 San Diego

Judges Comment: "Cool video essay. Great high-energy visuals, concise commentary, matches visuals. I enjoyed this piece."

Photography – Video: Portrait

First Place: Chris Keeney “Portrait of Salk Fellow Talmo Pereira: Salk Institute for Biological Studies

Judges Comment: "A refreshing alternative to the common portrait."

PR, PIO and Trade Publication: Association/Member Publication

First Place: Staff “San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance Journal”

San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance

Second Place: Aubrey Lloyd, Mike Hausberg, Caitlin Hannah, Sara Maher, Jayoung Mackenzie, Jennifer MacEwen Wild Connections “2025 Vol. 1

San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance

PR, PIO and Trade Publication: Special Interest on One-Time Publications

First Place: Caitlin Hannah, Lisa Bissi, Chris Padilla "Nature's Survival Instincts"
San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance

PR, PIO and Trade Publication: Newsletter

First Place: Chloe Pedersen, Mia Park "New, Now, Next Newsletter"
Ranch & Coast Magazine

Judges Comment: "If a newsletter could sparkle, this would be it! There's such a cool vibe to it. It embodies what an effective, attractive, informative newsletter should be. Well done."

Second Place: Salk Communications Office "Salk Newsletter" –
October & November 2024 Salk Institute for Biological Studies

Judges Comment: "This is a sophisticated and effective way to reach an audience. If I were on your mailing list, I would definitely click to open and read many of its stories. Nice work."

Third Place: Ellie McMillan, Caitlin Hannah, Sara Maher, Jayoung Mackenzie
"Notes from the Field" 2025 No. 5; Nature's Comeback Tour San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance

Judges Comment: "What a wonderful newsletter! It's a pleasure to both look at and read, easy to navigate, and serve the modern-day reader's attention span."

PR, PIO and Trade Publication: Press Release Writing-Serious Subject

First Place: Denise Scatena, Geneva Gámez

"San Diego Rotary Names Ben and Nikki Clay 'Mr. and Mrs. San Diego 2024;'
Scatena Daniels Communications

Second Place : Melissa Suran "Two HIV vaccine trials show proof of concept for pathway to broadly neutralizing antibodies" Scripps Research

Third Place: Gayle Lynn Falkenthal “Point In Time Count Results Pinpoint Solutions to Address Older Adult Homelessness” Falcon Valley Group

Honorable Mention: Denise Scatena “San Diego Blood Bank Begins 75th Anniversary Celebration” Scatena Daniels Communications

PR, PIO and Trade Publication: Press Release Writing - Light Subject

First Place: Sempra's SDG&E Communications Team “They’re Baaaa-ck: SDG&E Deploys 300 Goats in San Diego” Sempra

Second Place: Gayle Lynn Falkenthal “Serving Seniors Leadership Transition Supports Continued Success” Falcon Valley Group

Third Place: Ann Marie Price, Connor Christiansen, Denise Scatena “GI Film Festival San Diego Celebrates 10 Years” Scatena Daniels Communications

Honorable Mention: Connor Christiansen, Denise Scatena “Torrey Pines Lacrosse Coach Jono Zissi Cements San Diego as a West Coast Powerhouse”
Scatena Daniels Communications

**PR, PIO and Trade Publication: General Writing for
External Publication**

First Place: Jennifer Whitelaw “Lifesaver at the Bay” TW2 Marketing

Second Place: Ann Marie Price, Sarah Flocken “Meal deliveries for seniors save taxpayers and governments money.” Scatena Daniels Communications

Third Place: Annie Pierce "Unexpected Impact: Concussion Derails Football Dreams, Experts Help Ignite Hurdles Talent" UC San Diego Health

Honorable Mention: Jeanna Vazquez “Patient Support Program Reunites Childhood Friends” UC San Diego Health

PR, PIO and Trade Publication: General Writing for Internal Publication

First Place: Gayle Lynn Falkenthal “Farewell” Falcon Valley Group

Second Place: Rick Griffin “Realtors Trade Group’s Blog: Monthly Housing Economic Report” Pacific Southwest Association of Realtors

Third Place: Rick Griffin “Realtors Trade Group’s Blog: Monthly Housing Economic Report” Pacific Southwest Association of Realtors

PR, PIO and Trade Publication: Annual Report

First Place: Staff San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance 2024 Annual Report, “New Chapters in Conservation” San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance

Radio & Podcast: Breaking News

First Place Phil Farrar "No Kings Day: San Diego, CA " KOGO Radio

Second Place: Veronica Carter, Ted Garcia, Lucinda Kay, Jon Fink, Dan Mitchinson “

San Diego Plane Crash May 22, 2025” KOGO Radio

Radio & Podcast: Series

First Place: Phil Farrar “McDonald's Massacre: 40 Years Later / Gift of Life” KOGO Radio

Radio & Podcast: Feature

First Place: Phil Farrar “San Diego's Mighty Military” KOGO Radio

Radio & Podcast: Talk/Interview/Call-in Programs

First Place: Miriam Raftery “Who will be there when they come for you?”
EastCountyMagazine.org

Radio & Podcast: Podcast

First Place: Salk Communications Office “Beyond Lab Walls”

Salk Institute for Biological Studies

Judges Comment: "A brainy conversation; engaging, with considered reasons for optimism through research."

Second Place: Jennifer Whitelaw, Suzanne Lawrence “The Finest City - Knowledge to Action / San Diego Bay” Whitelaw Marketing

Judges Comment: "Outstanding/economical exposition to create a sonic environment for well-told stories of history, environment, culture, and commerce. Conversational and informative; this judge was hooked."

Radio & Podcast: Specialty Reporting - Single Report

First Place: Alexander Nguyen “Recent deaths put spotlight on contact sports. Should kids be playing?” KPBS News

Judges Comment: "Great storytelling, involving the injured player at the beginning and end draws in the listener -- while discussing both sides of the issue in the middle."

Second Place: Phil Farrar “Operation Frequent Wind: 'The Fall of Saigon'” KOGO

Radio Judges Comment: “Interesting piece. Would have benefitted from introducing the pilot a little earlier.”

Third Place: Lucinda Kay “Goodness - Musician Emily Marshall” KOGO Radio

Judges Comment: "Nice interview, learning about her life and performances."

Radio & Podcast: Use of Sound

First Place: Phil Farrar “Tate Carew: 'The Grind for Paris Olympic Gold'” KOGO Radio

Radio & Podcast: Audio Editing

First Place: Dave Drexler "Inside Art 2024: In Remembrance" KSDS-FM

Judges Comment: “The editor did a great job weaving music and interviews in and out throughout the program.”

Second Place: Phil Farrar “Mc Donald's Massacre: Forty Years Later” KOGO Radio

Judges Comment: "Nice use of archival sound woven into today's audio. There was some peaking, and some phone noise, but other than that, it sounded great."

Third Place: Mike Jeffs “John Reynolds on how the brain knows the world” Salk Institute for Biological Studies

Judges Comment: "Interesting interview, with a great attempt to add interest in related audio clips. However, at times, the clips were abrupt (try fading in and out) and overpowered the speaker. Some of the speaker's and interviewer's levels were uneven."

Radio & Podcast: Writing Feature

First Place: Phil Farrar "The Conclave: San Diego Catholics Wait" KOGO Radio

Second Place: Salk Communications Office "Getting to the Root of Alzheimer's"
Salk Institute for Biological Studies

Radio & Podcast: Writing News

First Place: Phil Farrar "KOGO 12 Noon News Phil Farrar" KOGO Radio

Television & Online Video: Breaking News

First Place: Jennifer Franco, Michael Sauced "LA Jolla Flooding" FOX 5 San Diego

Second Place: Elizabeth Alvarez, David Pradel "Plane Crashes in Murphy Canyon
Neighborhood" Fox 5 San Diego

Television & Online Video: Live Report

First Place: Elizabeth Alvarez, David Pradel "San Diego Honor Flight Departs to
D.C." Fox 5 San Diego

Television & Online Video: News Feature Same Day

First Place: Jennifer Franco, Michael Saucedo "Local ICE Raid" FOX 5 San Diego

Second Place: Christelle Koumoué, Joseph Ruiz "Riding Toward Hope" FOX 5 San
Diego

Third Place: Alexander Nguyen, Carlyne Corelis "FBI warns of rise in 'sextortion'
scams targeting teens" KPBS News

Television & Online Video: News Feature Pre-Produced

First Place: Christelle Koumoué, Sasha Bryhadyr "Threads of Identity" FOX 5 San Diego

Second Place: Andrew Luria, Zak Bartleet "Live from Carlsbad, It's CHSTV!"
FOX 5 San Diego

Third Place: Enedina Cisneros, Lindsey Peña, Maria-Camila Murcia "Schools, Families, Y La Música Que Los Une" KGTV

Third Place: Elizabeth Alvarez, David Pradel "TERI Campus of Life" Fox 5 San Diego

Honorable Mention: Christelle Koumoué, Geovanni Arreola "Riding life's Waves"
FOX 5 San Diego

Television & Online Video: News Feature – Series

First Place: Jacob Aere, Roland Lizarondo, David Washburn, Elaine Alfaro, Brenden Tuccinardi "Soccer a la Frontera" KPBS

Second Place Elsa Elena Sevilla, Guillermo Sevilla "Historic Places the Del's Grand Rooms Restoration" Historic Places KPBS-TV/Sevilla Productions, LLC

Third Place: Alejandra Enciso Dardashti "Theatres in San Diego: From Another Zero" From Another Zero

Television & Online Video: Specialty Reporting - Single Report

First Place: Enedina Cisneros, Lindsey Peña, Gerald Labrador, Jimmy Dedios "Historical Echoes: Deportation, Repatriation, and Finding Cultural Empowerment"
KGTV

Third Place: Roberto Camacho "Police Violence Against Latinos: The Shocking Data We Now Know" Laura Flanders & Friends

Honorable Mention: Andrew Luria, Ruby Chen, Christopher Short "The Electric Prodigy: A 13-Year-Old's Anthem for America" FOX 5 San Diego

Television & Online Video: Special Reporting – Series

First Place: Enedina Cisneros, Wale Aliyu, Gerald Labrador, Jimmy Dedios “Marie Widman: A Legacy Worth Preserving” KGTV

Third Place: Jacob Aere, Roland Lizarondo, David Washburn, Elaine Alfaro, Brenden Tuccinardi “Soccer a la Frontera” KPBS

Honorable Mention: Alexander Nguyen, Elaone Alfaro, McCoy Knapp "Fall of Sàigòn at 50: Stories of loss, legacy and identity" KPBS News

Television & Online Video: Investigative Reporting - Single Report

First Place: Tony Shin, Spencer Thornburg, Michael Saucedo “Stolen Nutcracker”
FOX 5 San Diego

Second Place: Maya Trabulsi, David Washburn, J W August “Wandering officer’ case highlights struggle to hold police accountable” KPBS

Third Place: JW August and David Washburn “Teed Off!” KPBS

Television & Online Video: Investigative Reporting – Series

First Place: Roberto Camacho “Police Violence Against Latinos: The Shocking Data We Now Know” Laura Flanders & Friends

Television & Online Video: Interview/Talk Show

First Place: Alejandra Enciso Dardashti, Marti Gobel “Marti Gobel, Producing Artistic Director: OnWord Theatre" From Another Zero

Second Place: Alejandra Enciso Dardashti, Gloria Calderón Kellett “Interviews From Another Zero: Gloria Calderón Kellett” From Another Zero

Television & Online Video: Documentary

First Place: Enedina Cisneros, Kimberly Hunt, Jessica Howard, Gerald Labrador, Luella Mata “Contaminated Coast: Call for Federal Action” KGTV

Second Place: Elsa Elena Sevilla, Guillermo Sevilla “Historic Places - The Del's Restoration History” Historic Places KPBS-TV/Sevilla Productions, LLC

Television & Online Video: Sports Reporting

First Place: Alexander Nguyen, Carolyn Corelis “Recent deaths put spotlight on contact sports. Should kids be playing?” KPBS News

Judges Comment: “EXCELLENT!”

Second Place: Jacob Aere, Roland Lizarondo, David Washburn, Elaine Alfaro, Brenden Tuccinardi “Soccer a la Frontera / Soccer a la Frontera — Episode 3: Women's soccer takes root” KPBS

Third Place: Frank Jefferson, Michael Saucedo “EA Sports College Football 2025”
FOX 5 San Diego

Honorable Mention: Gayle Lynn Falkenthal “Emiliano Vargas Chases His Dreams”
NY Fights

Television & Online Video: Video Editing

First Place: Michael Saucedo, Juliette Vara “Battling Wildfire from above”
FOX 5 San Diego

Second Place: David Pradel “Visiting the House of Puerto Rico at Balboa Park”
Fox 5 San Diego

Television & Online Video: Writing Feature

First Place: Andrew Luria "Live from Carlsbad, It's CHSTV!" FOX 5 San Diego

Second Place: Enedina Cisneros, Gerald Labrador, Isaac Cadriel “Man Swims Through Historic Flood to Rescue Cats” KGTU

Website: News Site

First Place: Staff The San Diego Union-Tribune

Judges Comment: "This is a clean website with things that are easy to find. It's not clogged up by advertisements. The topics are strong, and the writing is tight."

Second Place: Chris Jennewein and Staff Times of San Diego

Third Place: Ron Donoho The San Diego Sun

Website: Entertainment Site

First Place: Ron James Wine Dine & Travel Magazine

Second Place: Rob Marlborough (web designer), Susanna Peredo Swap (content editor) Vanguard Culture

Third Place: Mark Burgess, Ken Herman, David Dixon SanDiegoStory.com

Website: General Interest Site

First Place: Chloe Pedersen, Bob Stefanko, Mia Park, Anya Shah
Ranch & Coast Magazine

Second Place: Staff San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance Story Hub
San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance

Third Place: Katie Stokes, Maria Hesse, Wallendorf Studios Edible San Diego

Website: Blog for/by Corporation or Group

First Place: Carl Nettleton, Shauna Buffington "The Transition" OpenOceans
Global

Website: Blog: Topic Based

First Place: Tom Gable San Diego Wine Guru

Second Place: Cassiopeia Guthrie On The Craft

Website: Overall Use of Design

First Place: Scripps Research Communications Office Winter 2025 - Scripps
Research Magazine Landing Page Scripps Research

Second Place: Staff Catholic Diocese of San Diego website The Southern Cross

Third Place: Ron James Wine Dine & Travel Magazine

