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APA Better Newspaper Contest Award Winners Announced

Birmingham, AL (May 25, 2018) – Select winners of the 2018 Alabama Press Association Better Newspaper Contest were announced by Dee Ann Campbell, chairman of the APA Better Newspaper Contest Committee. This year, 62 newspapers submitted 2,129 entries in the annual contest. The Virginia Press Association judged the entries.

The awards will be presented on Saturday, July 21 at the 2018 APA Summer Convention at the Perdido Beach Resort in Orange Beach, AL.

The following editorial categories will not be announced until the awards banquet. First place awards in these categories will be presented at the banquet. Publishers will be notified if their newspaper is among the first place winners in any of these categories.

- *General Excellence*
- *Public Service*
- *FOI – First Amendment Award*
- *Most Improved*
- *Best Newspaper Website*
- *Photograph of the Year*
- *Best Use of Photographs / Editorial Content*
- *Best Editorial Page or Section*
- *Best Lifestyle / Family Pages*
- *Best Sports Page*
- *Best Local Economic Coverage*
- *Story of the Year*
- *Best Local Education Coverage*
- *Best Local News Coverage*
- *Best Layout & Design*

Other first place awards presented at the banquet (also announced within) will include:

- *Best News Feature Story Coverage*
- *Best Headline*
- *Best Sports Single Event Story*
- *Best Online Breaking News Coverage*
- *Best News Photo*

Congratulations to all of the winners!

Alabama Press Association
2018 Better Newspaper Contest Winners

Category 9 – Best Spot News Story

Division A

- 1st Place TimesDaily (Florence) for "Colbert coroner dies in accident" by Bernie Delinski
2nd Place Alabama Media Group for "2 brothers dead in Birmingham murder-suicide" by Carol Robinson
3rd Place The Tuscaloosa News for "A larger than life legacy" by Mark Hughes Cobb

Division B

- 1st Place The Selma Times-Journal for "Not The Selma I Grew Up In" by Blake DeShazo
2nd Place The Outlook (Alexander City) for "Plane crashes near Dadeville" by Mitch Sneed
3rd Place The Cullman Times for "Standoff ends in fire, man's death" by Benjamin Bullard

Division C

- 1st Place The Sand Mountain Reporter (Albertville) for "Hurricane Irma" by Taylor Beck, Jay Beard
2nd Place The Choctaw Sun-Advocate (Gilbertown) for "Twister rips residents from mobile home" by Dee Ann Campbell
3rd Place The Call News (Citronelle) for "Dog fight operation is busted" by Jason Boothe

Division D

- 1st Place The Islander (Gulf Shores) for "Gulf Shores Mardi Gras Parade Accident" by Crystal Cole
2nd Place The Greenville Standard for "Brawl at GHS leads to 12 arrests" by Bruce Branum
3rd Place Sumter County Record-Journal (Livingston) for "Prystupt Packaging fires suspicious" by Thomas Ausborn

Division E

- 1st Place The Auburn Plainsman for "Alt-right leader Richard Spencer visits results in largely peaceful protests" by Chip Brownlee
2nd Place The Auburn Plainsman for "Two Tiger Transit employees charged with rape" by John Pilati
3rd Place The Auburn Plainsman for "Chuck Person to be charged with fraud" by Chip Brownlee

Category 10 – Best In-Depth News Coverage

Division A

- 1st Place The Decatur Daily for "Sheriff Ana Franklin" by Keith Clines
2nd Place Alabama Media Group for "Lawmaker under investigation after taking money, fighting Superfund cleanup of toxic neighborhoods" by John Archibald, Kyle Whitmire
3rd Place Alabama Media Group for "Too poor to vote: How Alabama's 'new poll tax' bars thousands of people from voting" by Connor Sheets

Division B

- 1st Place The Daily Sentinel (Scottsboro) for “Don Siegelman” by DeWayne Patterson
2nd Place Opelika-Auburn News for “NCAA investigation of Auburn coach, Chuck Person” by Kara Coleman, Keith Huffman, Josh Vitale
3rd Place The Selma Times-Journal for “Water turned off” by Blake Deshazo

Division C

- 1st Place The Lagniappe (Mobile) for “Sheriff’s deputy Chris Parsons” by Jason Johnson
2nd Place Birmingham Business Journal for “Amazon Incentives Project” by staff
3rd Place Birmingham Business Journal for “What Trump's environmental policy will mean” by Stephanie Rebman

Division D

- 1st Place The Courier (Daphne/Fairhope) for “Fairhope Mayor Assault Claim” by Cliff McCollum
2nd Place The Eufaula Tribune for “Eufaula gives go-ahead to vote” by Tiffany Woo, Kyle Mooty
3rd Place The Moundville Times for “Domestic violence murders, suicide and responses” by Travis Vaughn

Division E

- 1st Place Iron City Ink (Birmingham) for “UAB School Series” by staff
2nd Place The Auburn Plainsman for “Protection and collateral damage” by Kris Martins
3rd Place The Cherokee Post (Centre) for “New hospital CEO” by staff

Category 11 – Best Business Story or Column

Division A

- 1st Place The Tuscaloosa News for “Farmers Assess Diaster's Toll” by Ed Enoch
2nd Place Alabama Media Group for “Mr. Jim's Last Vegetable Plate” by Bob Carlton
3rd Place The Decatur Daily for “Hospitals' storm” by Eric Fleischauer

Division B

- 1st Place The Selma Times-Journal for “What Happened: St. James Hotel boarded up” by Justin Averette
2nd Place The Clanton Advertiser for “Sixty years later” by Anthony Richards
3rd Place Opelika-Auburn News for “Flying high over a briar patch by Troy Turner

Division C

- 1st Place Birmingham Business Journal for “The Other Side of Amazon” by Ty West, Stephanie Rebman
2nd Place The Lagniappe (Mobile) for “Growing market for the Southern oyster” by Jason Johnson
3rd Place Birmingham Business Journal for “What the future holds for Regions Harbert Plaza” by Brent Godwin

Division D

- 1st Place The Auburn Villager for “Lawsuit filed against Planning Commission” by Allison Blankenship
2nd Place The Demopolis Times for “Still Pumping After 75 Years” by Robert Blankenship
3rd Place The Greenville Advocate for “City to purchase hospital” by Tracy Salter

Division E

- 1st Place Iron City Ink (Birmingham) for “A New Age of Business” by Sydney Cromwell
2nd Place Village Living (Mountain Brook) for “The biggest day in Smith's history” by Lexi Coon
3rd Place The Cherokee Post (Centre) for “Cavanagh’s farm a long way from home” by Kathy Roe Buttram

Category 12 – Best Feature Story Coverage

Division A

- 1st Place Alabama Media Group for “Gregg Allman” by Matt Wake
2nd Place Alabama Media Group for “Immigration transformed this rural Alabama town” by Anna Claire Vollers
3rd Place Alabama Media Group for “Wayne Perkins” by Matt Wake

Division B

- 1st Place The Outlook (Alexander City) for “Sojourn in the saddle” by Mitch Sneed
2nd Place The Outlook (Alexander City) for “Kendrick goes back in time to produce one last bale of cotton” by Mitch Sneed
3rd Place The Outlook (Alexander City) for “Floral Brilliance: Pat Fuller has created a rainbow of colors on Maple Street” by Mitch Sneed

Division C

- 1st Place The Alabama Baptist (Birmingham) for “Uncle Cudjo” by Grace Thornton
2nd Place The Choctaw Sun-Advocate (Gilbertown) for “Constructing History” by Dee Ann Campbell
3rd Place Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for “Segregated Sunday” by Briana Harris

Division D

- 1st Place The Greenville Advocate for “Chance online encounter reunites family with photo “ by Angie Long
2nd Place The Southeast Sun (Enterprise) for “Homeless in the City of Progress” by Michelle Mann
3rd Place Sumter County Record-Journal (Livingston) for “Ms. Blackie, 'Hwy. 80 dog' dies” by Herman Ward

Division E

- 1st Place 280 Living (Birmingham) for “Building robots, building confidence” by Erica Techo
2nd Place Cahaba Sun (Trussville) for “New York Story” by Jesse Chambers
3rd Place The Homewood Star for “Aidan Cockrell: On the Ball” by Sydney Cromwell

Category 13 – Best News Feature Story Coverage

Division A

- 1st Place Alabama Media Group for “The unexpected addict: How heroin destroyed an Alabama drug counselor” by Amy Yurkanin
2nd Place Dothan Eagle for “Enterprise Tornado: 10 years later” by Staff
3rd Place The Decatur Daily for “Averting disaster” by Michael Wetzel

Division B

- 1st Place The Cullman Times for “Cold Springs native among Americans not forgotten for war sacrifices” by Benjamin Bullard
2nd Place The Daily Sentinel (Scottsboro) for “Don Siegelman” by DeWayne Patterson
3rd Place The Daily Sentinel (Scottsboro) for “Remembering Coach Strickland” by DeWayne Patterson

Division C

- 1st Place The Lagniappe (Mobile) for “DACA recipients face uncertainty as Trump asks Congress to act” by Dale Liesch
2nd Place Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for “Suicide leads to culture change in tight-knit city” by Neal Wagner
3rd Place The Alabama Baptist (Birmingham) “Pray for Mount Zion” by Margaret Colson

Division D

- 1st Place The Onlooker (Foley) for “Elberta Police Chief” by Cliff McCollum
2nd Place The Auburn Villager for “The struggle to keep Auburn's tradition alive” by Brian Woodham
3rd Place The Demopolis Times for “Hero in Demopolis” by Robert Blankenship

Division E

- 1st Place 280 Living (Birmingham) for “Expanding a dialogue” by Alyx Chandler
2nd Place Village Living (Mountain Brook) for “These are our people” by Lexi Coon
3rd Place Vestavia Voice for “Family, friends of Ginny Bourland continue fight for gynecological cancer awareness, research” by Emily Featherston

Category 14 – Best Editorial

Division A

- 1st Place Alabama Media Group for “Alabama voters must reject Roy Moore; we endorse Doug Jones for U.S. Senate” by John Hammontree
2nd Place The Dothan Eagle for “Someone Needs to Speak Up” by Bill Perkins
3rd Place The Tuscaloosa News for “A courageous response sends strong message” by staff

Division B

- 1st Place Opelika-Auburn News for “Auburn University's board of trustees owes AU family a full explanation” by Troy Turner
2nd Place Opelika-Auburn News for “It's time Moore steps aside for Alabama's sake” by Troy Turner
3rd Place Daily Mountain Eagle (Jasper) for “Our View: We must pass tax for our future” by staff

Division C

- 1st Place Birmingham Business Journal for “Another tone deaf lawsuit puts Alabama brand at risk” by Ty West
2nd Place Birmingham Business Journal for “Alabama's self-inflicted wounds taking their toll” by Ty West
3rd Place The Alabama Baptist (Birmingham) for “Racism is wrong” by Dr. Bob Terry

Division D

- 1st Place The Baldwin Times for “What will you decide to do?” by Gulf Coast Media Editorial Board
2nd Place The Demopolis Times for “Time to move past city's statue debate” by staff
3rd Place The Greenville Advocate for “Battling those holiday blues” by Angie Long

Division E

- 1st Place Courier Journal (Florence) for “Eradicate The Founding Fathers?” by Tom Magazzu
2nd Place The Redstone Rocket (Huntsville) for “Cancer screening guidelines provide proactive plan” by Katie Skelley
3rd Place Courier Journal (Florence) for “Does Genderless Mean Senseless?” by Tom Magazzu

Category 15 – Best Humorous Column

Division A

- 1st Place The Dothan Eagle for “Parenting, not so well done” by Jim Cook
2nd Place Alabama Media Group for “Alabama braces for devastating 1 to 2 inches of snow” by Matt Mitchell
3rd Place TimesDaily (Florence) for “Another one of those nights” by Bernie Delinski

Division B

- 1st Place The Fort Payne Times-Journal for “I’ve always loved blowing things up” by Bradley Roberts
2nd Place The Outlook (Alexander City) for “A man dog shouldn’t be smarter than the man” by Mitch Sneed
3rd Place Daily Mountain Eagle (Jasper) for “Some holiday traditions happen by accident” by James Phillips

Division C

- 1st Place The Lagniappe (Mobile) for "Hidden Agenda: The humor columns of Ashley Trice" by Ashley Trice
2nd Place The Lagniappe (Mobile) for "Damn the Torpedoes: The humor of Rob Holbert" by Rob Holbert
3rd Place The Choctaw Sun-Advocate (Gilbertown) for "I Hope They Don't Mistake Me for a Seal" by Dee Ann Campbell

Division D

- 1st Place The Baldwin Times (Foley) for "Call center crazies" by Cliff McCollum
2nd Place The Eufaula Tribune for "I think I'll just stay here and swat gnats" by Kyle Mooty
3rd Place The Wetumpka Herald for "Holidays bring fireworks ... to my kidneys!" by David Granger

Division E

- 1st Place Courier Journal (Florence) for "Not All It's Cracked Up To Be" by Jim Fisher
2nd Place Courier Journal (Florence) for "Facebook Frenimies" by Jim Fisher
3rd Place Courier Journal (Florence) for "You Are All Going To Die" by Jim Fisher

Category 16 – Best Human Interest Column

Division A

- 1st Place Alabama Media Group for "My journey of being ashamed to be black" by Jonece Starr Dunigan
2nd Place Alabama Media Group for "The Bad News: I don't have Parkinson's" by Mike Oliver
3rd Place The Tuscaloosa News for "A dad who took pride in being a father" by Joey Chandler

Division B

- 1st Place Opelika-Auburn News for "A boy's ice cream melts hearts" by Troy Turner
2nd Place The Daily Sentinel (Scottsboro) for "A love of baseball" by DeWayne Patterson
3rd Place The Outlook (Alexander City) for "Lessons learned from life's hard knocks" by Mitch Sneed

Division C

- 1st Place The Choctaw Sun-Advocate (Gilbertown) for "The Little Can Overshadow the Big After All" by Dee Ann Campbell
2nd Place Call News (Citronelle) for "Hop on the biased media Time Machine" by Emmett Burnett
3rd Place The Citizen of East Alabama (Phenix City) for "Perhaps too late I learned the difference" by Mark Clark

Division D

- 1st Place The Eufaula Tribune for "My generosity did not include welcoming cats" by Kyle Mooty
2nd Place The Eufaula Tribune for "Remembering the good times at Western Auto" by Kyle Mooty
3rd Place The Dadeville Record for "What you think of you is all that matters" by Mitch Sneed

Division E

- 1st Place Courier Journal (Florence) for "Give Christmas a Hand" by Cathy Turner
2nd Place Courier Journal (Florence) for "Strength Through Struggle" by Steve Shelton
3rd Place Courier Journal (Florence) for "What a Mule Taught Me" by Steve Shelton

Category 17 – Best Editorial Column or Commentary

Division A

- 1st Place Alabama Media Group for "2017: The year of peak Alabamafication" by Kyle Whitmire
2nd Place Alabama Media Group for "Was that monkey experiment email racist?" by John Hammontree
3rd Place The Tuscaloosa News for "Roy Moore was not the only loser on Tuesday" by Tommy Stevenson

Division B

- 1st Place The Outlook (Alexander City) for “My two cents on the heart of Russell Corp.” by Mitch Sneed
2nd Place Opelika-Auburn News for “Yes, LGBTQ put a float in the parade; don't miss the bigger headline” by Troy Turner
3rd Place The Clanton Advertiser for “The Possum King of Chilton County” by Billy Singleton

Division C

- 1st Place The Lagniappe (Mobile) for “Damn the Torpedoes: The columns of Rob Holbert” by Rob Holbert
2nd Place The Lagniappe (Mobile) for “Hidden Agenda: The columns of Ashley Trice” by Ashley Trice
3rd Place The Monroe Journal (Monroeville) for “An open letter to all NFL protestors” Bo Bolton

Division D

- 1st Place The Baldwin Times (Foley) for “Alabama can be better” by Cliff McCollum
2nd Place The Wetumpka Herald for “Facebook killing sparks quests for answers” by David Granger
3rd Place The Demopolis Times for “Park & Recreation swinging for the fences” by Robert Blankenship

Division E

- 1st Place The Auburn Plainsman for “For the good of Auburn, Jay Jacobs must go” by staff
2nd Place Courier Journal (Florence) for “When Your Whole World Changes” by Tom Magazzu
3rd Place Courier Journal (Florence) for “Relentless Leader Inspired Others” by Tom Magazzu

Category 18 – Best Sports News In-Depth Coverage

Division A

- 1st Place The Tuscaloosa News for “Should Your Kid Play Football?” by staff
2nd Place Alabama Media Group for “Title IX investigation found ex-Auburn football player Landon Rice 'responsible' for sexual assault” by James Crepea
3rd Place Alabama Media Group for “Inside the technology giving Alabama a competitive edge” by Rainer Sabin

Division B

- 1st Place The Selma Times-Journal for “Champs” by Thomas Scott, Alaina Denean Deshazo
2nd Place Opelika-Auburn News for “Jay Jacobs stepping down as Auburn's athletics director” by Josh Vitale
3rd Place The Clanton Advertiser for “Man and machine” by Anthony Richards

Division C

- 1st Place Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for “Dabo Swinney coverage” by staff
2nd Place The Sand Mountain Reporter (Albertville) for “Former Boaz coach dies at 39” by Shannon Allen
3rd Place Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for “Regions Tradition coverage” by Alec Etheredge, Keith McCoy

Division D

- 1st Place The Eufaula Tribune for “Basketball success; Caesar took EHS” by Kyle Mooty
2nd Place The Auburn Villager for “Chuck Person charged in bribery scheme” by Brian Woodham
3rd Place Cherokee County Herald (Centre) for “The Meat of the Sandwich” by staff

Division E

- 1st Place Village Living (Mountain Brook) for “Lacrosse capital of Alabama” by Sam Chandler
2nd Place Cahaba Sun (Trussville) for “Going the Distance” by Sam Chandler
3rd Place 280 Living (Birmingham) for “Juggling Act” by Kyle Parmley

Category 19 – Best Sports Single Event Story

Division A

- 1st Place Alabama Media Group for “The story inside Alabama's stunned locker room 'like a death in the family’” by Michael Casagrande
- 2nd Place The Tuscaloosa News for “Tide AD” by Ben Jones, Aaron Suttles
- 3rd Place Alabama Media Group for “From Tim Cook to Jarrett Stidham, Auburn's Iron Bowl celebration for the ages” by John Talty

Division B

- 1st Place The Cullman Times for “Cullman County Tourney: Lady Aggies storm past Cold Springs to win 1st county title since 198” by Jake Winfrey
- 2nd Place The Cullman Times for “Never Give Up: Willoughby overwhelmed with outpouring of community support” by Jake Winfrey
- 3rd Place The Selma Times-Journal for “Thanks Coach: DC wins, holds ceremony to honor Moore's career” by Daniel Evans

Division C

- 1st Place Citronelle Call News for “You’ve got to have faith” by Tommy Hicks
- 2nd Place Citizen of East Alabama for “Wright gets 600th win” by Mark Clark
- 3rd Place The Monroe Journal for “Bulldogs do it again” by Mike Qualls

Division D

- 1st Place Cherokee County Herald (Centre) for “Hateful D earns Spring Garden” by Shannon Fagan
- 2nd Place The Greenville Advocate for “Georgiana football ends abruptly” by Jonathan Bryant
- 3rd Place The Moulton Advertiser for “Chiefs return from the dead” by Caleb Suggs

Division E

- 1st Place The Redstone Rocket (Huntsville) for “Amputee softball team inspires just by taking field” by Skip Vaughn
- 2nd Place Vestavia Voice for “State track and field: Thomas' triumph highlights Day 1” by Sam Chandler
- 3rd Place Madison Weekly News for “Its All Good” by Bob Labbe

Category 20 — Best Sports Feature Story

Division A

- 1st Place Alabama Media Group for “The beat goes on: How drums helped Auburn's Stephen Roberts triumph over tragedy” by Tom Green
- 2nd Place Alabama Media Group for “How the coach who followed Bear Bryant still has his fingerprints on Alabama” by Rainer Sabin
- 3rd Place Alabama Media Group for “Late father a motivator for Alabama's latest walk-on success story” by Matt Zenitz

Division B

- 1st Place The Selma Times-Journal for “1977 Selma team looks back on championship” by Daniel Evans
- 2nd Place The Daily Mountain Eagle for “Wrestling perfect fit” by Johnathan Bentley
- 3rd Place Opelika-Auburn News for “The Man Behind The Mask” by Josh Vitale

Division C

- 1st Place Citronelle Call News for “When ‘Bama’ was ‘The Natural’” by Tommy Hicks
- 2nd Place Citronelle Call News for “Tribute to Satsuma player’s mother” by Darron Patterson
- 3rd Place The Monroe Journal for “World Champion” by Mike Qualls

Division D

- 1st Place The Eufaula Tribune for “Troy to honor Eufaula legend” by Kyle Mooty
2nd Place The Wetumpka Herald for “Monster Motivation” by Cory Diaz
3rd Place The Greenville Advocate for “Local takes first in martial artist tourney” by Jonathan Bryant

Division E

- 1st Place Hoover Sun for “First lady of Hoover football” by Jon Anderson
2nd Place Vestavia Voice for “Playing Hardball” by Kyle Parmley
3rd Place 280 Living (Birmingham) for “Uncommon Star” by Kyle Parmley

Category 21 — Best Local Sports Column

Division A

- 1st Place Alabama Media Group for “Man goes in creek for Saban autograph and adventure begins” by Joseph Goodman
2nd Place The Tuscaloosa News for “Remembering a dad who took pride in being a father” by Joey Chandler
3rd Place Alabama Media Group for “Hugh Freeze proven to be a sanctimonious fraud” by John Talty

Division B

- 1st Place Selma Times-Journal for “Celebration long overdue for Concordia basketball” by Daniel Evans
2nd Place Selma Times-Journal for “Coaches often face tough scenarios” by Daniel Evans
3rd Place Athens News Courier for “Anthem protests dividing country” by Jeff Edwards

Division C

- 1st Place Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for “Nafe will be remembered for never giving up” by Alec Etheredge
2nd Place Call News (Citronelle) for “Joey Jones built the Jaguars” by Tommy Hicks
3rd Place The Citizen of East Alabama (Phenix City) for “He ate his way to the top of his sport” by Mark Clark

Division D

- 1st Place The Greenville Advocate for “Powell transformed Georgiana” by Jonathan Bryant
2nd Place Opelika Observer for “Alabama Withdraws Myers's Scholarship Offer” by D. Mark Mitchell
3rd Place The Auburn Villager for “SEC should swap divisions for Auburn, Missouri” by Brian Woodham

Division E

- 1st Place Courier Journal (Florence) for “A Touch of Love and Class” by Jerry Knight
2nd Place 280 Living (Birmingham) for “High School Athletics Year in Review” by Kyle Parmley
3rd Place Madison Weekly News for “For Johnny, signing to play in college was a little different” by Bob Labbe

Category 22 – Best Feature Photo

Division A

- 1st Place TimesDaily (Florence) for “Downtown hosts First Friday” by Jim Hannon
2nd Place The Decatur Daily for “Crescent Moon Smile” by Crystal Vander Weit
3rd Place The Decatur Daily for “Puddle Reflection” by Jeronimo Nisa

Division B

- 1st Place The Selma Times-Journal for “Purple rain” by Alaina Denean Deshazo
2nd Place The Outlook (Alexander City) for “Eclipse with church steeple” by Mitch Sneed
3rd Place Opelika-Auburn News for “Lake Martin Polar Plunge” by Todd Van Emst

Division C

- 1st Place The Choctaw Sun-Advocate (Gilbertown) for “Praise in the Park” by Andrea Graham
- 2nd Place The Choctaw Sun-Advocate (Gilbertown) for “Bone Chillin’ Cold” by Dee Ann Campbell
- 3rd Place The Advertiser-Gleam for “Snow and Sleigh” by Adam Prestridge

Division D

- 1st Place The Greenville Advocate for “GHS grads” by Jonathan Bryant
- 2nd Place The Greenville Advocate for “Eclipse” by Jonathan Bryant
- 3rd Place The Demopolis Times for “Baptism Aboard the Wedge” by Robert Blankenship

Division E

- 1st Place The Redstone Rocket (Huntsville) for “Path to education” by Bryan Bacon
- 2nd Place Iron City Ink (Birmingham) for “UAB Marching Band” by Sarah Finnegan
- 3rd Place Cahaba Sun (Trussville) for “Hewitt-Trussville High School Band” by Sarah Finnegan

Category 23 — Best News Photo

Division A

- 1st Place The Dothan Eagle for “Dothan Mourns Slain Teen” by Jay Hare
- 2nd Place The Decatur Daily for “Little Activist” by Jeronimo Nisa
- 3rd Place Alabama Media Group for “Biden at the BJCC” by Joe Songer

Division B

- 1st Place Opelika-Auburn News for “Vigil for fatal mobile home fire” by Todd Van Emst
- 2nd Place The Clanton Advertiser for “Jemson graduation” by Steven Calhoun
- 3rd Place Athens News Courier for “Solar eclipse at SPARK Academy” by Jessica Barnett

Division C

- 1st Place Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for “Live-fire training” by Keith McCoy
- 2nd Place The Choctaw Sun-Advocate (Gilbertown) for “Homecoming (Embrace)” by Dee Ann Campbell
- 3rd Place Call News (Citronelle) for “Music and smiles at USA” by Brad McPherson

Division D

- 1st Place The Greenville Advocate for “Pioneer Electric meeting” by Angie Long
- 2nd Place The Courier (Daphne/Fairhope) for “Walk to School Day” by staff
- 3rd Place Opelika Observer for “Auburn Beats Bama” by Robert Noles

Division E

- 1st Place Hoover Sun for “Gary Palmer Town Hall” by Sarah Finnegan
- 2nd Place The Redstone Rocket (Huntsville) for “Raise a glass” by Bryan Bacon
- 3rd Place The Redstone Rocket (Huntsville) for “Sgt Maj takes a moment” by Bryan Bacon

Category 24 — Best Spot News Photo

Division A

- 1st Place Alabama Media Group for “Impending Bentley resignation” by Joe Songer
- 2nd Place The Montgomery Advertiser for “Air show acrobatics” by Matt McKean
- 3rd Place The Tuscaloosa News for “Claybrook Fire” by Erin Nelson

Division B

- 1st Place The Selma Times-Journal for “Not The Selma I Grew Up In” by Alaina Denean Deshazo
- 2nd Place Opelika-Auburn News for “Richard Spencer protestors clash with supporters” by Todd Van Emst
- 3rd Place The Fort Payne Times-Journal for “Fire claims home” by Candra Roberts

Division C

- 1st Place The Choctaw Sun-Advocate (Gilbertown) for “Fiery Crash” by Dee Ann Campbell
2nd Place The Citizen of East Alabama (Phenix City) for “Cemetery flooding” by Blenda Copeland
3rd Place The Advertiser-Gleam (Guntersville) for “Tree was only escape option” by Joe Cagle

Division D

- 1st Place The Southeast Sun (Enterprise) for “Murder suspect captured” by Laura Fezie
2nd Place Clay Times-Journal (Lineville) Journal for “Fire Destroys Mountain Home ” by Justin McCullers

Division E

- 1st Place The Auburn Plainsman for “Protester at Richard Spencer event in Auburn” by Matthew Bishop
2nd Place Vestavia Voice for “Vestavia Flood Drone” by staff
3rd Place The Redstone Rocket (Huntsville) for “Commander in chief” by Bryan Bacon

Category 25 – Best Sports Photo

Division A

- 1st Place Alabama Media Group for “AISA State Championship” by Julie Bennett
2nd Place The Decatur Daily for “Excited Fan” by Jeronimo Nisa
3rd Place TimesDaily (Florence) for “Three-Peat” by Matt McKean

Division B

- 1st Place The Clanton Advertiser for “Dirt bike ride” by Anthony Richards
2nd Place The Enterprise Ledger for “Wildcats Smash Smiths Station” by Henry Otto
3rd Place Daily Mountain Eagle (Jasper) for “Oakman leap” by Johnathan Bentley

Division C

- 1st Place Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for “Husky Heroes” by Keith McCoy
2nd Place The Advertiser-Gleam (Guntersville) for “Seniors hug after loss” by Joe Cagle
3rd Place The Citizen of East Alabama (Phenix City) for “Justyn Ross one handed catch” by Glenn Peppers

Division D

- 1st Place The Dadeville Record for “Pressure is on” by Cliff Williams
2nd Place Opelika Observer for “Tim Hudson Pitches for Miracle League” by Robert Noles, Rebekah Martin
3rd Place The Greenville Advocate for “Georgiana falls to Sacred Heart” by Jonathan Bryant

Division E

- 1st Place The Redstone Rocket (Huntsville) for “Autograph” by Bryan Bacon
2nd Place Vestavia Voice for “Pole Vault at Sunset” by Sarah Finnegan
3rd Place Iron City Ink (Birmingham) for “Timothy Alexander and UAB Football” by Sarah Finnegan

Category 26 — Best Photo Essay

Division A

- 1st Place The Decatur Daily for "Robert is my hero" by Crystal Vander Weit
2nd Place Alabama Media Group for “Election in Alabama” by Joe Songer
3rd Place The Tuscaloosa News for “Honor Flight” by Gary Cosby Jr.

Division B

- 1st Place The Cullman Times for “Highs & Lows” by Amanda Shavers-Davis
2nd Place The Outlook (Alexander City) for “Fight Night Halloween 2017” by staff

3rd Place The Clanton Advertiser for “History in action” by staff

Division C

1st Place Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for “Prepped for disaster” by Keith McCoy

2nd Place Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for “The blue map” by Keith McCoy

3rd Place The Choctaw Sun-Advocate (Gilbertown) for “Ripped Apart: Tornado hits Choctaw” by Dee Ann Campbell

Division D

1st Place The Dadeville Record for “Play Ball: Opening Day” by Cliff Williams

2nd Place The Eufaula Tribune for “One driver still critical after Friday wreck” by Tiffany Woo

3rd Place Opelika Observer for “Flashy Fourth” by Robert Noles, Rebekah Martin

Division E

1st Place The Redstone Rocket (Huntsville) for “Oktoberfest” by Bryan Bacon

2nd Place Iron City Ink (Birmingham) for “Record number of fans celebrate UAB football's return” by Sarah Finnegan

3rd Place 280 Living (Birmingham) for “280 Living Fido Fest 2017” by Emily Featherston

Category 27 — Best Use of Graphics or Illustrations

Division A

1st Place The Tuscaloosa News for “Concussion Awareness has shot through the roof” by staff

2nd Place The Tuscaloosa News for “A future without football?” by staff

3rd Place Alabama Media Group for “Reckonaissance Reports” by Ramsey Archibald

Division B

1st Place The Outlook (Alexander City) for “Driven” by Kenneth Boone, staff

2nd Place The Daily Sentinel for “Debt consolidation” by DeWayne Patterson

3rd Place The Selma Times-Journal for “Deadly year” by Blake Deshazo

Division C

1st Place Birmingham Business Journal for “Mapping the Surge” by Derek Morrow

2nd Place Birmingham Business Journal for “How values are changing in key areas” by Derek Morrow

3rd Place The Citizen of East Alabama (Phenix City) for “Top 10 moments” by staff

Division D

1st Place The Southeast Sun (Enterprise) for “JS2S helps new students feel welcome” by Laura Fezie

2nd Place The Southeast Sun (Enterprise) for “Farm City Week” by staff

3rd Place The Southeast Sun (Enterprise) for “Weather Worry” by Laura Fezie

Division E

1st Place 280 Living (Birmingham) for “A Bridge Too Far” by Kristin Williams

2nd Place The Redstone Rocket (Huntsville) for “Hall of Heroes” by Amy Tolson, Bryan Bacon, Kelley Lane

3rd Place Vestavia Voice for “Holiday in the Hills Event Map” by Melanie Viering

Category 28 – Best Headline

Division A

1st Place The Tuscaloosa News for “Alabama says no Moore” by Ken Roberts

2nd Place The Tuscaloosa News for “Glazed and enthused” by Ken Roberts

3rd Place TimesDaily (Florence) for “Mollie's full, bright future” by staff

Division B

- 1st Place The Cullman Times for “Uh, The Dude? Big Lebowski, Saban among local write-in votes” by Amanda Shavers-Davis
- 2nd Place The Outlook (Alexander City) for “Chicken Truck Cluck Up” by Mitch Sneed
- 3rd Place The Selma Times-Journal for “Cease Fire” by Justin Averette

Division C

- 1st Place Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for “Cutting the grass” by Alec Etheredge
- 2nd Place The Monroe Journal (Monroeville) for “Train slams into stranded” by Bo Bolton
- 3rd Place The Lagniappe (Mobile) for “Barley Legal” by Dale Liesch

Division D

- 1st Place Opelika Observer for “Keepin' it Reel” by Rachel King
- 2nd Place The Greenville Advocate for “KFC grilled by customer complaints” by Jonathan Bryant
- 3rd Place The Eufaula Tribune for “I've got a 50 percent chance of being right, right?” by Kyle Mooty

Division E

- 1st Place Village Living (Mountain Brook) for “Living La Vida Local” by Kristin Williams
- 2nd Place Iron City Ink (Birmingham) for “Didgeridude” by Sydney Cromwell
- 3rd Place Hoover Sun for “Absinthe Minded” by Erica Techo

Category 29 — Best One Time Special Section – Newsprint or Glossy

Division A

- 1st Place The Tuscaloosa News for “Should Your Kid Play Football?” by staff
- 2nd Place The Tuscaloosa News for “Ten, A decade of dominance” by staff
- 3rd Place The Tuscaloosa News for “Mercedes, A Driving Force” by staff

Division B

- 1st Place Opelika-Auburn News for “Road to Atlanta” by staff
- 2nd Place The Clanton Advertiser for “Progress “ by staff
- 3rd Place The Outlook (Alexander City) for “Alexander City Outlook 125 Years of Service” by staff

Division C

- 1st Place Birmingham Business Journal for “Partners in Philanthropy” by staff
- 2nd Place The Monroe Journal (Monroeville) for “Forestry” by Bo Bolton
- 3rd Place The Citizen of East Alabama (Phenix City) for “The Making of Men Football Guide” by staff

Division D

- 1st Place The Greenville Advocate for “Pet Calendar” by staff
- 2nd Place The Demopolis Times for “Demopolis 200” by staff
- 3rd Place The Southeast Sun (Enterprise) for “Veterans Day” by staff

Division E

- 1st Place The Redstone Rocket (Huntsville) for “Breast Cancer Pink” by staff
- 2nd Place The Redstone Rocket (Huntsville) for “Memorial Day” by staff
- 3rd Place The Redstone Rocket (Huntsville) for “Veterans Day” by staff

Category 30 — Best Niche Publication – Newsprint or Glossy

Division A

- 1st Place The Tuscaloosa News for “Running Wild” by staff Editorial
2nd Place TimesDaily (Florence) for “Tennessee Valley Brides” by staff
3rd Place The Tuscaloosa News for “2018 Photo Calendar” by staff

Division B

- 1st Place Athens News Courier for “Blitz 2017” by Jeff Edwards
2nd Place The Selma Times-Journal for “Gridiron 2017” by staff
3rd Place The Outlook (Alexander City) for “Driven” by staff

Division C

- 1st Place The Alabama Baptist (Birmingham) for “The Alabama Baptist: Celebrating 175 Years of Informing, Inspiring and Connecting Baptists” by staff
2nd Place Shelby County Reporter for “Shelby County football 2017” by Alec Etheredge
3rd Place Birmingham Business Journal for “Book of Lists” by Dan Bagwell, Derek Morrow, Brooke Howell

Division D

- 1st Place The Greenville Advocate for “Chamber Magazine” by staff
2nd Place The Greenville Advocate for “Football Magazine” staff
3rd Place The Southeast Sun (Enterprise) for “Bride” by staff

Division E

- 1st Place Hoover Sun for “The History of Hoover” by staff
2nd Place 280 Living (Birmingham) for “Birmingham Metro Football Magazine” by Kyle Parmley, Sam Chandler, Sarah Finnegan
3rd Place The Auburn Plainsman for “Welcome Back” by staff

Category 31 — Creative Use of Multimedia

Division A

- 1st Place The Decatur Daily for “Robert is My Hero – A mother’s journey to secure medical marijuana for her son” by Crystal Vander Weit, Catherine Godbey
2nd Place The Decatur Daily for “Last Man Standing: Episode 1, The Man and the River” by Jeronimo Nisa, Catherine Godbey
3rd Place The Tuscaloosa News for “Your guide to Tuscaloosa regional softball” by Tommy Deas, Molly Walsh

Division B

- 1st Place Opelika-Auburn News for “Alt-right speaker Richard Spencer visits Auburn University” by staff
2nd Place The Cullman Times for “LIVE RESULTS | Cullman Co. voters turn out in droves to support Moore in unsuccessful senate bid” by Tiffeny Owens
3rd Place The Outlook (Alexander City) for “Chicken Truck Cluck Up” Mitch Sneed

Division C

- 1st Place Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for “Game of the week football videos” by Alec Etheredge
2nd Place The Choctaw Sun-Advocate (Gilbertown) for “SunTV” by staff
3rd Place Birmingham Business Journal for “Crane Watch” by Brent Godwin

Division D

- 1st Place The Southeast Sun (Enterprise) for “City cemetery holds key to Enterprise history” by Laura Fezie, Michelle Mann
2nd Place The Southeast Sun (Enterprise) for “Local children show off their creative transformations” by Laura Fezie
3rd Place The Southeast Sun (Enterprise) for “Walls up at new Coppinville” by Cassie Gibbs, Michelle Mann

Division E

- 1st Place 280 Living (Birmingham) for “A Bridge Too Far” by staff
2nd Place The Auburn Plainsman for “A day in the life: Ric Smith and a behind the scenes look at the Auburn Gameday” Gannon Padgett
3rd Place Vestavia Voice for “Taming the Flow” by Emily Featherston, Alyx Chandler

Category 32 — Online Breaking News Coverage

Division A

- 1st Place TimesDaily (Florence) for “Boyfriend charged in woman’s shooting death” by Tom Smith
2nd Place The Decatur Daily for “Area braces for remnants of Hurricane Irma” by staff
3rd Place TimesDaily (Florence) for “Tommy Arthur Execution” by Tom Smith, Bernie Delinski

Division B

- 1st Place The Selma Times-Journal for “Not The Selma I Grew Up In” by Blake Deshazo
2nd Place The Outlook (Alexander City) for “Two suspected killers in custody, charged in the killing of LaDarrell Hart” by Mitch Sneed
3rd Place The Outlook (Alexander City) for “Highway 280 shooting” by Mitch Sneed

Division C

- 1st Place Birmingham Business Journal for “Birmingham lands national historic monument designation for Civil Rights District” by staff
2nd Place Birmingham Business Journal for “Coverage of launch of Innovate Birmingham” by Ty West, Tyler Patchen
3rd Place Birmingham Business Journal for “Bentley resignation” by staff

Division D

- 1st Place Sumter County Record-Journal (Livingston) for “Escapee Captured” by Tommy McGraw, Travis Vaughn, Kasey DeCastra
2nd Place The Southeast Sun (Enterprise) for “Murder suspect captured during SWAT raid” by Cassie Gibbs
3rd Place The Southeast Sun (Enterprise) for “Cooper new Enterprise mayor” by Michelle Mann

Division E

- 1st Place Vestavia Voice for “Heavy rain causes ‘unprecedented’ flooding in lower U.S. 31 Corridor” by Emily Featherston
2nd Place 280 Living (Birmingham) for “Hoover teen killed Tuesday night remembered as charismatic, fun-loving guy” by Jon Anderson
3rd Place Iron City Ink (Birmingham) for “Birmingham Mayoral Election Coverage” by Lexi Coon, Jesse Chambers

Category 33 — Best Use of Social Media

Division A

- 1st Place Alabama Media Group for “Reckon by AL.com” by Ramsey Archibald and staff
2nd Place The Tuscaloosa News for “Tide Sports- Twitter” by staff
3rd Place TimesDaily (Florence) for “Ronnie Pannell sees son’s memorial for the first time” by Matt McKean

Division B

- 1st Place The Outlook (Alexander City) for “Inside the lines live” by Lizi Arbogast and Scott Hardy
2nd Place The Daily Sentinel (Scottsboro) for “100th Day of School” by staff
3rd Place The Selma Times-Journal for “Gridiron Cover Contest” by Alaina Denean Deshazo, Thomas Scott

Division C

- 1st Place Shelby County Reporter (Columbiana) for “Football game of the week Facebook videos” by Alec Etheredge
- 2nd Place The Advertiser-Gleam (Guntersville) for “Facebook Page” by staff
- 3rd Place Birmingham Business Journal for “Birmingham Business Journal Facebook Live Series” by staff

Division D

- 1st Place Sumter County Record-Journal (Livingston) for “Escapee Captured” by Tommy McGraw, Travis Vaughn, Kasey DeCastr
- 2nd Place The Atmore Advance for “Facebook” by staff
- 3rd Place The Moundville Times for “Missing from the Family Dollar?” by Kasey DeCastr, Travis Vaughn

Division E

- 1st Place Vestavia Voice for “July 2017 Flood Coverage” by Emily Featherston
- 2nd Place Hoover Sun for “Gary Palmer Town Hall” by Lexi Coon, Sarah Finnegan
- 3rd Place 280 Living (Birmingham) for “Snow Day Photos” by Alyx Chandler