



Best of Mississippi

Scholastic Journalism Awards

F A L L

Winners will be announced at the MSPA statewide high school journalism convention at the University of Southern Mississippi on Oct. 30. Publications must be MSPA members to win. Contact MSPA director R.J. Morgan for more information.

Mississippi Scholastic Press Association
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University, MS 38677



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Rules and Regulations

**DUE
SEPT
15**

ELIGIBILITY AND COST

The only requirement for eligibility in any of our contests is that your publication be a member of MSPA. All contests are free to enter.

TYPES OF AWARDS

MSPA awards excellence in four different areas of scholastic journalism. The contest calendar breaks down like this:

FALL

Yearbook

Literary Magazine

SPRING

News Publication (paper/magazine/site)

Broadcast

** There are five Spring awards that are open to any student or publication (details in the Spring packet.)*

Within each of the above areas, contests break out into **Publication (PUB)** and **Individual (IND)** categories. For Publication Categories, schools submit examples of the staff's abilities in a given area, and awards are issued in the name of the publication. For Individual Categories, schools submit strong individual works for recognition, and awards are issued in the name of the student.

CONTEST STRUCTURE

In most PUB and IND categories, judges will select up to five finalists and one winner.

SUBMISSION

We've tried to make submitting your work as uniform as possible. Only pieces submitted properly (and on time) will be considered in each category. Once you have shared your submissions, you may not make any edits or changes to the files/entries.

PUBLICATION CATEGORIES – Mail-in Submission

For these whole-book categories, please send the entire print publication for judging. Each publication is automatically entered in every relevant PUB category.

Our mailing address:

Mississippi Scholastic Press Association
102 Farley Hall
PO BOX 1848
University, MS 38677

INDIVIDUAL CATEGORIES – Digital Submission

To submit digitally, begin by creating a Dropbox or Google Drive account (Google Drive is preferable). Both of these are free and user-friendly.

1. Once you've created an account, create an MSPA Submissions folder in your account. This is where all your digital files will go.
2. Now you're ready to stock your Submissions folder with all the files you plan to enter. DO NOT use subfolders. Your files will automatically sort by the category codes in the file name.

FILE NAMES – All file names should follow this format: **CategoryCode_School_StudentName**. When submitting multiple entries from the same student in the same category, tack on a 1, 2 or 3 at the end of the filename.

FILE TYPES – Photos should be submitted as JPEGs. Everything else should be PDFs. Please crop pages down to only the elements being judged in that category.

3. Include one PDF with a composite list of entries, ordered by category with a total file count. This list helps us ensure all submissions were received.
4. Once all your files are in your submissions folder, simply share that folder with **mississippischolasticpress@gmail.com**. The office will download the files as soon as they are uploaded, and advisers will get an email confirming the submissions have been received. If you do not receive an email notification within 24 hours of submission, please email MSPA director R.J. Morgan at morgan@go.olemiss.edu.

If you have any questions about the submission process, call or email for clarification.

*** All entries become the property of the Mississippi Scholastic Press Association and may be displayed in a collection of winning entries. Because of time and financial constraints, printed entries cannot be returned. ***



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ADVISER OF THE YEAR

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Good journalism advisers are the most critical part of a program's success. They are more than just teachers; they're managers, motivators, mentors and sometimes even mediators. They are asked to simultaneously be visionaries and micro-managers, helping their students navigate through a variety of daily struggles. These are the people who make scholastic journalism possible, and MSPA seeks to honor those Mississippi advisers who excel at their craft.

AWARD CYCLE:

SPRING

JoAnne Sellers Newspaper Adviser of the Year

Broadcast Adviser of the Year

FALL

Caroline Fair Yearbook Adviser of the Year

Literary Magazine Adviser of the Year

APPLYING

Applying for these awards involves a **two-step process**. A call for nominations will be sent out on the MSPA listserv early in the fall semester, and a brief (100 words or less) online nomination form should be completed **on or before Aug. 20**. Nominations should explain why the nominee is deserving of the honor and can be submitted by anyone (principal, colleague, adviser, student, parent, etc., or the nominee themselves). A committee of judges will evaluate all nominations and narrow the field to five (5) finalists, each of whom will be prompted to complete a more detailed self-reflection form before the normal Sept. 15 contest deadline. Any adviser/editor at an MSPA-member school is eligible, regardless of school size.



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Yearbook Division

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Yearbooks are one of the most sacred and important institutions entrusted to high school students. They stand as a permanent chronicle of this place in time for both the school and the community. MSPA seeks to honor excellence in these publications, as well as in the students who produce them. Below is a comprehensive list of categories honored. All entries should be published this calendar year.

PUBLICATION AWARDS

These are awarded in the name of the publication. **We'll use the entire yearbook to judge the publication awards. Send one book -- no additional submissions necessary.**

1. Photography

Overall best use of student photography to capture and document the school year, and to reflect the culture of the school (i.e. homecoming, pep rallies, parades, cheer sections, etc.). Photos should demonstrate strong storytelling content, be effectively cropped for emphasis, technically strong, in focus, exhibit proper contrast and use of the rules of composition.

2. Copy

Overall best coverage/reporting of the school year including events, sports, academics, clubs and organizations. Copy should include meaningful student quotes that enrich the story and reflect effective interviewing by verbally creating a picture of the school year.

3. Graphics/Art

Overall best use of graphics in a publication. Graphics should show evidence of careful planning and clear purpose: to unify, separate, emphasize or direct and not used simply to decorate or fill space. Judging based on how well graphics compliment spreads' content and design.

4. Senior Advertising

Must be student-generated. Judging is based on the overall section layout and quality of design. Section should demonstrate elements of the theme while also showing innovative and attractive personal ad designs.

5. Cover Design

The cover sets the tone for the entire yearbook. Does it create a favorable first impression through use of type/color/materials? Must include book name, school name, year and volume number on the spine. Must be student-generated.

6. Overall Design

Overall best publication design based on correct use of journalistic / design principles. Design should show evidence of careful planning, consistency and fluidity. Photos, copy, captions, headlines, graphics and whitespace are arranged to guide the reader through the layout.

7. Theme Development

Overall best use of a theme/concept throughout a publication. Theme must be introduced on the book's cover and carried out visually/verbally on the ensuing endsheets, opening/closing pages, table of contents & sections dividers, and colophon. Careful development and unified presentation create a cohesive book that effectively tells the story of the school year.

8. Most Improved

To compete in this category, submit a copy of last year's book for comparison purposes.

9. Yearbook of the Year (Highest Honor, All-Inclusive)

Yearbook of the Year honors will be given to the publication that most-effectively demonstrates excellence in all the above-mentioned categories.



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Yearbook Division

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INDIVIDUAL AWARDS (LIMIT 3 ENTRIES PER CATEGORY, PER SCHOOL)

DIGITAL SUBMISSION (File Name Example: YFP_Brownsville_AbigaleBagwell)

1. Feature Photography (YFP)

Photo must reflect either the culture of the school (i.e. homecoming, pep rallies, parades, cheer sections, etc.) or accompany a specific story (stylized, environmental, etc). The photo must have strong-storytelling content, effectively cropped for emphasis, technically strong, in focus, proper contrast and use of the rules of composition.

2. Academic Photography (YAP)

A photo showing students involved in academics (classes, projects, or events). The photo must have strong-storytelling content, effectively cropped for emphasis, technically strong, in focus, proper contrast and use of the rules of composition.

3. Sports Photography (YSP)

A photo action shot showing a purposeful focus on the play. The photo must have strong-storytelling content, effectively cropped for emphasis, technically strong, in focus, proper contrast and use of the rules of composition.

4. Illustration / Graphic Package (YPI)

A manipulated photo illustration or group of elements within a spread used to visually enhance coverage. Includes infographics. Judging will be based on clarity and effectiveness.

5. Feature Writing/Reporting (YFR)

Writing should be clear, relevant and have an engaging angle with a solid lead that draws readers into the story. Writing should include meaningful student quotes that enrich the story and reflect effective interviewing.

6. Sports Writing/Reporting (YSR)

Writing should be clear, relevant and have an engaging angle with a solid lead that draws readers into the story. Writing should include meaningful student quotes that enrich the story and reflect effective interviewing.

7. Student Life Spread (YSL)

This category is for spreads telling a story related to school academics, organizations and activities. Judging will be based on the attractiveness and effectiveness of the spread as a whole, including design, copy, art and photography. The spread should be entered in the name of the designer, whether or not they wrote any of the stories or took any of the photos on the spread.

8. Sports Spread (YSS)

This category is for spreads telling a story related to school athletics. Judging will be based on the attractiveness and effectiveness of the spread as a whole, including design, copy, art and photography. The spread should be entered in the name of the designer, whether or not they wrote any of the stories or took any of the photos on the spread.

9. Feature Spread (YFS)

This category is for spreads telling a story related to individuals or topics of student interest, or non-traditional coverage. Judging will be based on the attractiveness and effectiveness of the spread as a whole, including design, copy, art and photography. The spread should be entered in the name of the designer, whether or not they wrote any of the stories or took any of the photos on the spread.



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Literary Magazine Division

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Literary Magazines veer from the normal just-the-facts-ma'am method of journalism. They offer students a chance to express their creativity through fiction, poetry and art. MSPA celebrates this freedom of expression by awarding excellence in the categories below. Eligible Literary Magazines **must have been published AFTER Feb. 15 of the previous school year**. If your school publishes more than one issue per year, please include all issues published. Journalism is all about telling the best stories in the most original and effective way. **All categories** will be judged based on originality, professional quality and effectiveness. For literary writing, judges will also consider creativity, attention to detail and thoughtfulness.

PUBLICATION AWARDS

These are awarded in the name of the publication. **We'll use the entire yearbook to judge the publication awards. Send one book -- no additional submissions necessary.**

1. **Design** (attractiveness and readability)
2. **Theme** (Consistent throughout?)
3. **Most Improved** (submit a copy of last year's book for comparison purposes)
4. **Literary Magazine of the Year** (Highest Honor, All-Inclusive)

INDIVIDUAL AWARDS (LIMIT 3 ENTRIES PER CATEGORY, PER SCHOOL)

DIGITAL SUBMISSION (File Name Example: LMSF_Brownsville_AbigaleBagwell)

1. Short Fiction (LMSF)
2. Poem (LMP)
3. Nonfiction (LMNF)
4. Hand-drawn Illustration (LMDI)
5. Graphic Illustration (LMGI)
6. Photo (LMPH)