



Candidate: _____

State: _____

**Journalist of the Year
National Contest Scoring Rubric**

Judges should score each statement per the scale listed. The highest score means the candidate's work exceeds expectations and shows originality or creativity. A score of 0 means the work is not present.

SECTION 1 CATEGORY: CANDIDATE BACKGROUND (SELF-ANALYTICAL ESSAY AND RÉSUMÉ)

The journalist reflects on his/her growth in scholastic media and how this experience has shaped his/her current success.	/ 10
The journalist explains challenges he/she has faced along the way and how these were solved. (Examples could include prior review, censorship, financial obstacles, small staff, technology, etc.)	/ 10
The journalist writes with vibrancy about the impact of high school journalism on his/her life so far and expectations for future endeavors.	/ 10
The journalist addresses impact and/or transference of hard journalism skills and soft workplace skills.	/ 10

SECTION 2 CATEGORY: NEWS GATHERING

The journalist shows evidence of background research using a variety of sources, including experts.	/ 30
The journalist shows evidence of formulating and asking questions that elicit factual information as well as colorful quotes and includes observations when these add to the content.	/ 30
The journalist supports human sources with credible studies or research when these add context and depth to the piece.	/ 30

SECTION 2 CATEGORY: WRITING

The journalist analyzes, evaluates and synthesizes information from diverse sources to produce content for a variety of media.	/ 30
The journalist organizes information effectively, appropriate for the type of article.	/ 30
The journalist writes in third person and leaves himself/herself out of news and feature stories.	/ 30
The journalist, when writing opinion, constructs an effective argument addressing a subject that is both timely and relevant to the audience.	/ 30

SECTION 2 CATEGORY: EDITING

The journalist identifies strengths and weaknesses in his/her own writing, and/or in others' work, to improve structure, word choice, grammar, punctuation, spelling, accuracy and context.	/ 30
The journalist demonstrates mastery of AP and specific publication/broadcast style.	/ 30
The journalist provides feedback and constructive criticism to coach others in improving their writing.	/ 30

SECTION 2 CATEGORY: DESIGN

The journalist demonstrates an understanding of the basic elements of design, including dominance, contrast, eye flow, balance, alignment and unity.	/ 30
The journalist designs content that shows an understanding of how information and packaging relate to each other.	/ 30
The journalist designs content with traditional elements as well as alternative coverage that effectively conveys all information.	/ 30

SECTION 2 CATEGORY: MULTIMEDIA BROADCAST

The journalist writes for the ear, makes clear his/her purpose, and supports the story with credible sourcing.	/ 30
The journalist composes meaningful audio with consistent levels and free of distractions to enhance the story.	/ 30
The journalist includes well-composed visuals free of distractions.	/ 30
The journalist demonstrates effective editing skills and techniques to create content free of jump cuts, overuse of effects and gaps in storytelling.	/ 30

SECTION 2 CATEGORY: PHOTOJOURNALISM

The journalist plans, shoots and edits high quality photographs that demonstrate application of effective exposure, composition and color balance/contrast.	/ 30
The journalist captures unique storytelling moments.	/ 30
The journalist writes effective captions/cutlines that give all essential facts plus additional context.	/ 30

SECTION 2 CATEGORY: WEB

The journalist plans and executes timely online news coverage, selecting the appropriate presentation for the story.	/ 30
The journalist effectively edits text, audio, video, graphics and other elements that tell a story in context.	/ 30
The journalist demonstrates a basic understanding of programming languages to create customized, packaged online stories.	/ 30

SECTION 2 CATEGORY: LAW AND ETHICS

The journalist demonstrates knowledge about law by avoiding unprotected speech.	/ 30
The journalist illustrates the ability to deal with ethical considerations by handling such issues as anonymous sources, biased sources, misinformation, etc.	/ 30
The journalist reveals the reasoning in his/her work in the essay or the accompanying explanations of various content submitted.	/ 30

SECTION 3 CATEGORY: LEADERSHIP AND TEAM BUILDING

The journalist functions in a leadership role on his/her staff.	/ 20
The journalist works as a liaison between staff members and the adviser, and as a representative of the staff in the school and community.	/ 20
The journalist understands the importance of the staff and all coverage reflecting the diverse makeup of the community it represents, and this diversity is apparent in overall coverage.	/ 20

SECTION 3 CATEGORY: NEWS LITERACY

The journalist assesses and improves the credibility of a news story by using knowledgeable sources and verifying information.	/ 20
The journalist identifies bias within sources and his/her own personal disposition and puts the source's information in context.	/ 20
The journalist uses the best sources to fact-check stories and brainstorms and executes appropriate engagement with various media to promote the highest quality journalism.	/ 20

SECTION 3 CATEGORY: ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The journalist articulates a detailed profile of his/her media program's audience and its experience.	/ 20
The journalist uses that information to develop an audience engagement strategy that addresses branding, marketing, sales, fundraising, distribution and social media.	/ 20
The journalist provides evidence of how his/her audience engagement strategy was implemented, adapted and improved.	/ 20

SECTION 3 CATEGORY: REFLECTION

The journalist creates content that impacts readers and the wider community in a meaningful way.	/ 20
The journalist creates content that gives voice to the voiceless and raises awareness.	/ 20
The journalist creates content that emboldens positive change.	/ 20

TOTAL POINTS FROM ALL CATEGORIES
