

Hawaii SPJ Excellence in Journalism 2024

Wednesday, July 30, 2025

Ballroom, Japanese Cultural Center

Entries were judged by the Louisville Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists, and the Hawaii Pro Chapter judged Louisille’s contest.

Here are the Hawaii judges:

 Nancy Cook Lauer

 Joe Guinto

 Stirling Morita

 Peter Tang>

 Pat Tummons

 Vicki Viotti

 Aaron Yoshino

INTERNET

I101 Online News Reporting

First Place

“Locked Gates Trapped Lahaina Fire Victims”

Marcel Honore

Honolulu Civil Beat

Judge’s Comments: “These stories go beyond a government report's findings to get to the truth of a matter that deeply affected a community.”

Second Place

“Mental Health In Prisons”

Kevin Dayton

Honolulu Civil Beat

Third Place

“Machetes Are Common Tools In Hawaii – Including For Crime”

Madeleine Valera

Honolulu Civil Beat

I102 Online Feature Reporting

First Place

“The Long Road Home”

Brittany Lyte

Honolulu Civil Beat

Judge’s Comments: “This series of stories gives a personal and close look at the hardships of losing one's home and trying to find a way back to it.”

Second Place

“This Lahaina Family Has Found A New Life With Old Friends An Ocean Away”

Richard Wiens

Honolulu Civil Beat

Third Place

”Lahaina's Historic Elementary School Was A Source Of Community Pride. Now The Town Is Divided On Its Future”

Megan Tagami

Honolulu Civil Beat

I103 Best Multimedia Presentation

First Place

“Guardians of the Deep”

Nathan Eagle, April Estrellon, Kawika Lopez, Amy Pyle

Honolulu Civil Beat

Judge’s Comments: “This is exemplary climate reporting. The images drew me in and the writing style made this storytelling stand out in a very competitive category. Great use of multimedia - this is informative and engaging!”

Second Place

“Maui police present 98-page after-action report detailing 32 recommendations following Lahaina wildfire”

Wendy Osher

Maui Now

Third Place

”Disease Could Kill Most of The Big Island's 'Ohi'a Forests Within 20 Years”

April Estrellon, Marcel Honore, Kevin Fujii

Honolulu Civil Beat

I104 Best Overall News Site

First Place

“Hawaii Public Radio”

Sophia McCullough, Tori DeJournett

Hawaii Public Radio

Judge’s Comments “Aesthetically pleasing, easy to use, fun to read - and you make it very simple to click play on your audio clips for each article. Superb design - and very important voter guide.”

Second Place

“Honolulu Civil Beat”

Civil Beat Staff

Honolulu Civil Beat

Third Place

”Maui Now”

Wendy Osher, David Christy, Jack Dugan

Maui Now

I105 Best 1-Person Online Features Site/1-Person Features Blog

First Place

“Politics Hawaii with Stan Fichtman 2024 entries”

Stanford Fichtman

Politics Hawaii

Judge’s Comments: “Reading these articles feels like receiving emails from a friend on topics I'm interested in. They make the reader feel like they are looped in on stories they are hungry to learn more about. Excellent writing style paired with good fact gathering.”

M101 Business Reporting

First Place

“A Pearl of the South Seas”

Beau Flemister

Hana Hou!

Judge’s Comments: "This writer is a true wordsmith who managed to bring me directly into the scene. While leaning into moments of humor through the source's quotes and descriptive storytelling techniques, this writer shows the niche world of pearl farming in a way that is superiorly interesting. I also deeply appreciate the way the writer plainly dispels myths and shines a light on truth for how the pearls come to exist. The portion of the story focused on the business's origin was also powerful, I enjoyed the dip back in time to learn about the family and how their adventurous spirit led them to the business."

The three winners of this competition were truly beautifully written. I loved the character and color in all three and enjoyed seeing the strong reporting jump out in the final stories.

Second Place

“Private equity now owns nearly 30% of Hawai'i's hotel rooms”

Noelle Fujii-Oride

Hawaii Business

Judge’s Comments: “This piece is wonderfully reported and brings an astounding critical eye to an industry player that has been creating mayhem across the globe and does so in a very localized way. The writer manages to distill very complex issues around private equity into an easily understandable format to alert readers to the potential harm it can cause the Hawaii tourism world at large.”

Third Place

“Chipping In”

Katie Young Yamanaka

Hana Hou!

Judge’s Comments: "This small business, historical family feature was beautiful. I loved reading the thoughtfully written article and learning about this business that serves as an institution in the local area."

Competition Comments: The three winners of this competition were truly beautifully written. I loved the character and color in all three and enjoyed seeing the strong reporting jump out in the final stories.

M102 Industry or Trade Reporting

First Place

”Reports on Tourism”

Noelle Fujii-Oride, LiAnne Yu

Hawaii Business

Judge’s Comments: "This package was fabulous. Very strong lede and nut graf. The writer did a great job in distilling the complexities of private equity into digestible bites for the reader and providing stellar localized examples. Strong writing, a great use of mixed sources, wonderful usage of data and I love the design elements as well as little breakout boxes with additional information.”

Second Place

“Food & Dining”

Mari Taketa

Honolulu Magazine

Judge’s Comments: “This writer is wildly talented in the way they put me into the local food scene. I enjoyed the mis of long and short pieces and really could feel the connection to the food. I was left hungry and inspired by this entry.”

Third Place

“5 Reports on Residential Real Estate”

Shelby Mattos, Noelle Fujii-Oride, Janis Magin Meierdiercks

Hawaii Business

Judge’s Comments: “This compilation of writers showed they are deeply knowledgeable and sourced on the topic of housing in Hawaii.”

Competition Comments: "The entries varied across topics and industries, making the judging entertaining. I learned a lot about Hawaii and different challenges facing the state. The three winners stood out among the entries through their creative storytelling, easy to follow structures, strong sourcing and ability to keep me, a reader with no connection to the area, hooked and wanting more."

M103 Profile

First Place

“Rocket's Ascent”

Eunica Escalante

FLUX Hawaii

Judge’s Comments: "This puts the reader in the room! Great job, from the writing to imagery to layout. "

Second Place

"The Continuing, Continuing Story of Bungalow Bill"

Peter Von Buol

Hana Hou!

Third Place

“An Inspiring CEO of the Year”

Catharine Lo Griffin

Hawaii Business

M104 Feature Writing/Short Form

First Place

“Cultural Ascents”

Annabelle Le Jeune

FLUX Hawaii

Judge’s Comments: “Gorgeously written. I felt like I was there for the cleanup. Reporting and research was thoughtfully intertwined with the people behind educating climbers who are passionate about that kind of work. “

Second Place

“The Busboy Who Saved Aerosmith”

Larry Lieberman

Hana Hou!

M105 Feature Writing/Long Form

First Place

“Marks of Distinction”

Shannon Wianecki

Hana Hou!

Judge’s Comments: “Absolutely stunning reporting here.” This category had so many robust entries. I wish there were more places to award!

Second Place

“Navigating Hawai'i's Family-Leave Maze”

Cynthia Wessendorf

Hawaii Business

Competition Comments: “This category had so many robust entries. I wish there were more places to award!”

Third Place

“We've Got Seoul”

Diane Seo

Honolulu Magazine

“This category had so many robust entries. I wish there were more places to award!”

M106 Body of Work- Single Writer

First Place

“Highlights of Managing Editor Cynthia Wessendorf's 2024 Work “

Cynthia Wessendorf

Hawaii Business

Judge’s Comments: “Cynthia is clearly her newsroom's Swiss army knife. She writes with confidence and authority and knows how to keep readers engaged even when the subject matter needs to veer off into the weeds. Cynthia is obviously knowledgeable about her community without making her audience feel less than for not being in the know.”

Second Place

"A Tale of Two Islands, Bidding Up, The Artisans of Incandescence, Nourishing the Roots, Worlds in a Grain of Sand"

Martha Cheng

Hana Hou!

M107 Overall Page Design

First Place

“FLUX Hawaii \_ No. 46 S/S 24 \_ No. 47 F/W 24”

Taylor Niimoto, Coby Shimabukuro-Sanchez, Eleazar Herradura

FLUX Hawaii

Judge’s Comments: “This was very difficult — but in the end Flux Hawaii won me over with a mix of clean and edgy design ideas I hadn't see in other places. Great job.”

Second Place

“HONOLULU Magazine”

James Nakamura, Christine Labrador

Honolulu Magazine

Third Place

“Hawaii Business Magazine Overall Design Entry”

Jeff Sanner

Hawaii Business

M108 Best Single Feature Layout

First Place

“Lens & Language”

Taylor Niimoto

FLUX Hawaii

Judge’s Comments: “Truely high-level design that pulls you right into the feature and makes you want to know more about the subject. Tremendous design.”

Second Place

“She's a Force”

Christine Labrador, James Nakamura, Brie Thalmann, IJfke Ridgley

Honolulu Magazine

Third Place

“Navigating Hawai'i's Family-Leave Maze”

Jeff Sanner

Hawaii Business

M109 Magazine Cover

First Place

“95th Anniversary Issue”

Solomon Enos, Kamea Hadar, Shar Tuiasoa

Hana Hou!

Judge’s Comments: “Great use of color and artwork. “

Second Place

“Gen Z Cover”

Jeff Sanner

Hawaii Business

Third Place

“April 2024”

James Nakamura, Aaron K. Yoshino

Honolulu Magazine

Judge’s Comments: "Made me hungry. If I saw this cover, I would pick up the magazine immediately."

N102 News Page Design

First Place

‘Welcoming Back the Molokai Hoe “

Staff

Molokai Dispatch

Judge’s Comments: “A fun presentation that shows off a lot of content.”

Second Place

“Festivals of Aloha Kicks Off the Molokai Hoe”

Marissa Motas

Molokai Dispatch

Third Place

“Year in Review: January-June”

Marissa Motas

Molokai Dispatch

N104 General News/Enterprise Reporting

First Place

“New Ho'olehua Center Caught in Leadership Quagmire”

Jack Kiyonaga

Molokai Dispatch

Judge’s Comments: “The reporting in this story highlights how a group's disagreement can affect a community at large.”

N107 Community Reporting

First Place

“Pickleball 'Caught in a Pickle' “

Jack Kiyonaga

Molokai Dispatch

Judge’s Comments: "This story shows how a growing national trend, like pickleball, faces growing pains in one locale."

NM001 A-Mark Prize for Investigative Reporting

First Place

“HNN Investigates: Reports of Mishandled Remains”

Allyson Blair, Kaij Lundgren

Hawaii News Now

Judge’s Comments: "This investigation handles a heartbreaking topic with care and kindness on all sides. The interview with the former Maui police officer allowed a spotlight to shine on the issue & the reporting team handled the rest of the story with immense compassion for those lives lost in the fires. It was eye-opening that recruits, who didn't finish training yet, were tasked with this mass casualty event. This investigation should serve as an example for every newsroom to keep following up on the breaking news story. Congratulations to what is clearly an incredible newsroom! "

Second Place

"Dozens of Oahu drivers arrested, jailed for DUI despite tests showing no alcohol in their systems"

Lynn Kawano, Peter Tang, Monet Sadural

Hawaii News Now

Third Place

”Child Welfare Secrecy”

John Hill

Honolulu Civil Beat

NM002 Ulupono Prize for Sustainability Reporting

First Place

“The Heat Is Rising in Honolulu. More Trees Will Help Cool It Off.”

Cynthia Wessendorf

Hawaii Business

Judge’s Comments: "The winning entry features extensive research and reporting while being presented in an easy-to-understand way. ‘It's death by a thousand cuts’ is such a poetic quote to include in the piece. The end section of ‘what's next’ is crucial. Solution-based climate reporting like this could save lives. 1 newly planted bus-stop tree at a time."

Second Place

“The Rain Catchers”

Keali'i Thoene

Hana Hou!

Third Place

“Water and the Law”

Teresa Dawson, Patricia Tummons

Environment Hawai'i

NM101 Column Writing or Blog/News

First Place

“Naka Nathaniel Columns: We Are Saltwater People”

Naka Nathaniel

Naka Nathaniel

Judge’s Comments: “One writer stands out from the pack of excellent writers. There's a unique storytelling ability in these entries that kept me hooked. A truthfulness oozes out of every sentence & ideas were supported throughout the prose. I wanted every column to be longer because I wanted to keep reading. It was very thoughtful to read a piece connecting this new generation of children to his Dad & what it means to be Hawaiian.”

Second Place

“The Sunshine Blog”

Patti Epler, Richard Wiens, Chad Blair

Honolulu Civil Beat

Third Place

“The shutdown of SMS Marketing and Research”

Stanford Fichtman, Andrew Walden

Politics Hawaii

NM102 Column Writing or Blog/Features or Sports

First Place

“Blast From The Past”

Jessica Terrell

Honolulu Civil Beat

Judge’s Comments: “Very well researched columns that viewed current day problems through a historical lens.”

Second Place

“The marriage of Hawaiian and Alaska Airlines - from proposal to taking the oath”

Stanford Fichtman

Politics Hawaii

Third Place

“Afterthoughts”

Katrina Valcourt, James Nakamura, Mari Taketa

Honolulu Magazine

NM103 Government Reporting

First Place

“How Far Is Too Far? Parents Push The Limits Of Harassment In Hawaii Schools”

Megan Tagami

Honolulu Civil Beat

Judge’s Comments: “This story examines how a proposed state policy could impact situations within a school district and the legal system. The reporter did a great job at showing how dangerous these situations left unchecked could become. “

Second Place

“HNN Investigates: Reports of Mishandled Remains”

Allyson Blair, Kaij Lundgren

Hawaii News Now

Third Place

Hawai’i's Strong Sunshine Law Is Burning Some Public Officials

Patti Epler

Honolulu Civil Beat

Competition Comments: "With many strong entries in this competition with great work focused on bringing the truth to light and hold the powerful accountable, it was not easy to judge this competition. Hawaii is lucky to have so many great journalists keeping an eye on issues in the state."

NM104 Breaking News Reporting

First Place

“Westside Shooting”

Madeleine Valera

Honolulu Civil Beat

Judge’s Comments: “Thorough and thoughtful reporting. Clearly y'all are asking the right questions and having internal conversations about how to keep pushing this story forward.”

NM105 Health Reporting

First Place

“Navigating Hawai'i's Family-Leave Maze”

Cynthia Wessendorf

Hawaii Business

Judge’s Comments: "This issue effects so many people, and this reporting was well done with the potential for great impact."

Second Place

“Let's Talk About Menopause”

Mary Vorsino

Honolulu Magazine

Third Place

“Healthcare Shortage On Maui “

Brittany Lyte

Honolulu Civil Beat

NM106 Science Reporting

First Place

“Guardians of the Deep”

Nathan Eagle

Honolulu Civil Beat

Judge’s Comments: "Nathan is doing such compelling work in this series. He's taken complicated topics and made them easy-to-understand and accessible, itself an impressive feat. But he goes further. He writes with such attention to narrative, that the reader is both unwilling and unable to look away. Bravo."

Second Place

“How A Human Bone Collection in Honolulu Aids Forensic Anthropology in Asia”

Suah Cho

Honolulu Civil Beat

Third Place

“How A Team Of Dedicated Cops And Scientists Sorted Through Ash And Rubble To Identify Lahaina's Fire Victims”

Jessica Terrell

Honolulu Civil Beat

NM107 Data Journalism Story or Series

First Place

“Government Workers In Hawaii Get Paid Not To Work As Misconduct Investigations Drag On For Months Or Years”

Christina Jedra

Honolulu Civil Beat

Judge’s Comments: "The pacing of this story is wonderful. As soon as a question popped into my head, it was immediately answered. Numbers, records, graphs and more were perfectly paired with human stories and real world examples. Great work on display here. I'm interested to know what the follow-up stories looked like."

Second Place

“West Oahu Has A Domestic Violence Crisis. The Cost Of Living Makes It Worse”

Jessica Terrell

Honolulu Civil Beat

Third Place

“Ranking Hawai'i's Biggest Companies and Nonprofits”

Cynthia Wessendorf

Hawaii Business

NM108 Sports Reporting

First Place

“Guiding Light”

Catharine Lo Griffin

Hana Hou!

Judge’s Comments: "This story was, by far, the best entry. I loved the use of quotes and the detailed descriptions. Compelling story with excellent photos to accompany it."

Second Place

“These Hawaii Seniors Say A Japanese Sport Holds The Key To A Healthier And Happier Life”

Suah Cho

Honolulu Civil Beat

Third Place

“Stadium Authority: Lone NASED bidder must provide quality or state will walk”

Brian McInnis

Spectrum News Hawaii

NM109 Arts/Entertainment Writing

First Place

“Generations Of Immigrants Have Forged A Unique Tattoo Culture In Hawaii “

Suah Cho

Honolulu Civil Beat

Judge’s Comments: “This is such an engaging piece - I was intrigued by the character right away and the pictures kept me scrolling and able to visualize the story. Great work!”

Second Place

“The Pen and the Sword”

Shannon Wianecki

Hana Hou!

Third Place

“Lei Day tradition continues on May 1”

Sarah Yamanaka

Spectrum News Hawaii

NM110 Editorial Opinion

First Place

“Pay-To-Play Politics Is Staring Us In The Face. What Are We Going To Do About It?”

"Chad Blair, Richard Wiens, Patti Epler"

Honolulu Civil Beat

Judge’s Comments: “Hooks the reader in the first paragraph with a strong opinion and holds on to the very end to encourage voter turnout.”

Second Place

“Those Launiupoko 'Farms'”

Patricia Tummons

Environment Hawai'i

Judge’s Comments: “Five excellent examples of opinion pieces that hold officials accountable while advocating for environmental issues. Well done.”

Third Place

“Here's One Way To Jolt Hawaii's Moribund Primary System Back To Life”

 Richard Wiens

Honolulu Civil Beat

Judge’s Comments: “Strong opinion written well and backed with facts to urge the reader towards solutions for local election processes.”

NM111 Editorial Cartoon/Illustration

First Place

“How We Live Now”

James Nakamura

Honolulu Magazine

Judge’s Comments: "This is vibrant and tells so many stories in each ‘box’ of the artwork. From the solar panels, to the bowling alley, to people living their everyday lives - this art is thoughtful and well executed.”

Second Place

“To Cede or to Seed? "'

Auli'i Nathaniel, Naka Nathaniel

Naka Nathaniel

Third Place

“Health Is Wealth”

James Nakamura

Honolulu Magazine

NM112 Informational Graphic

First Place

“Poll Measures the Pulse of Hawai'i's Businesses”

Jeff Sanner, Steve Petranik

Hawaii Business

Judge’s Comments: “The custom graphics in this piece make it stand out from all the entries in this category. I was hooked when I saw the mountain climb & I wanted to keep reading for the rowboat & food. This is an incredibly enticing informational graphic - it presents the information in an engaging way.”

Second Place

“Fixing Hawai'i's Deadly Roads”

Mallory Adams-Nakamura, Chavonnie Ramos

Hawaii Business

Third Place

“Polls Measure Residents' Attitudes about Hawai'i's Quality of Life and Population Decline”

Jeff Sanner, Steve Petranik

Hawaii Business

NM113 News Photography/Videography

First Place

“North Shore lifeguards flex amid huge swell “

Peter Tang, Lynn Kawano

Hawaii News Now

Judge’s Comments: "Great visual storytelling. The drone shots over the water and coming into the beaches are exceptional. The choice to put subjects, particularly the ones in interviews, in the right or left third makes it more interesting than your typical center-frame interview. The imagery accentuates the story very well."

Competition Comments: "Great visual storytelling. The drone shots over the water and coming into the beaches are exceptional. The choice to put subjects, particularly the ones in interviews, in the right or left third makes it more interesting than your typical center-frame interview. The imagery accentuates the story very well."

NM114 Feature Photography/Videography

First Place

“Hoaka De Los Reyes”

Dana Edmunds, Matt Mallams

Hana Hou!

Judge’s Comments: "This is a fascinating image, with the lighting, contrast and details bringing out its strengths. The 45-degree lighting makes for dynamic lighting on the face. The details of the hair, the face and the tribal tattoo draw my eye to each rich area of interest. The muted colors leave you to focus on the subject and his expression. His expression, which looks almost concerned, paired with his eyes looking off in the distance make me wonder immediately what is he looking at, what is worrying him and what is his story? That all makes for a powerful feature photo. "

Second Place

“The New Guide to Chinese Food”

Aaron K. Yoshino

Honolulu Magazine

Judge’s Comments: “Strong detail shots. Well composed and well-lit. This is a great series and each shot is filled with interesting elements.”

Third Place

“Manta Ray Tours Thrills and Debate”

Peter Tang, Mahealani Richardson

Hawaii News Now

Judge’s Comments: “Excellent aerial views. The stark contrast in the night shots between the blue lights and the surrounding darkness make for dramatic views”

NM115 Sports Photography/Videography

First Place

“Queen of Pipeline”

Arto Saari, Matt Mallams

Hana Hou!

Judge’s Comments: "This is a very high-level image and almost hard to judge. The composition is incredibly singular, with a near perfect fore, middle and background. The crashing wave about to swallow the surfer as she tries to outrun it makes for an instantly dramatic phots. The small detail of her hand knifing through the wall of the wave is the cherry on top. Finally, the contrast of light and dark, and the countervailing elements with sharp focus and those that are soft (ex. the spray off the top of the wave) add plenty of other areas of interest in the phot. You notice the subject first and then your eye moves all around the photo to take it in. Excellent shot, dynamic processing and rich details. "

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NM116 Photo/Video Essay

First Place

“Sandys Parking Lot “

Elyse Butler, Matt Mallams

Hana Hou!

Judge’s Comments: "Great angles, composition and lighting. These images instantly stood out to me as each photo tells a different story while still maintaining a common thread with the other images. "

Second Place

“Piled Higher and Deeper”

Marie Eriel Hobro, Matt Mallams

Hana Hou!

Judge’s Comments: “Fascinating subject matter and great portraiture. I liked the variety of poses and angles you used for the portraits, adding variety in addition to the head dresses. I especially liked the portrait with the glass reflection in front of the person's face."

Third Place

“Marks of Distinction”

Dana Edmunds, Matt Mallams

Hana Hou!

Judge’s Comments: "Excellent portraiture and subjects. I think the lighting and muted colors add a dramatic element to each image, even though their facial expressions are solemn and composed. This is a fantastic series!"

Competition Comments: "The entries were all exemplary and incredibly hard to judge one from the other. All of the photos are well done; in the end, it came down to what drew my interest more as the viewer."

NM117 Headlines

First Place

“Headlines from Hawaii Business Magazine”

Steve Petranik, Shelby Mattos, Kathryn Drury Wagner

Hawaii Business

Judge’s Comments: “The collection shows the perfect balance of kitschy and news-y. Each pulls you in to read the subhead and then the first paragraph and then all the way to the end. Nice showing here. “

Second Place

"The Artisans of Incandescence, Piled Higher and Deeper, Marks of Distinction, Realm of Stone and Sea, The Busboy Who Saved Aerosmith"

Michael Shapiro

Hana Hou!

Third Place

"Best headlines of Politics Hawaii, 2024"

Stanford Fichtman

Politics Hawaii

NM118 Best Explanatory Journalism

First Place

“Guardians of the Deep”

Nathan Eagle

Honolulu Civil Beat

Judge’s Comments: "You've captured an entire ecosystem. I felt like I was there, uncovering the algae with y'all, watching over a scientist's shoulder as he listened to the presidential debate. These stories guide the reader through an epic discovery and lays out plainly how disastrous one organism can be and why it's important to do something about it. "

Second Place

“The Next Lahaina? Hawaii Wildfires And How They Spread “

Thomas Heaton

Honolulu Civil Beat

Judge’s Comments: "Expertly done and well-crafted with strong passages that answer, ‘so what?’ “

Third Place

“Seeking a Way Forward on Ceded Lands”

Catharine Lo Griffin

Hawaii Business

Judge’s Comments: “An amazing lesson in local history.’

NM119 Special Section

First Place

“20 for the Next 20: Hawai'i's People to Watch”

Mallory Adams-Nakamura, Aaron Yoshino, Cynthia Wessendorf, Ryann Noelani Coules, Chavonnie Ramos

Hawaii Business

Judge’s Comments: “Excellent job in researching the leaders who are featured in this piece. The interviews make it easy to read and the photos are wonderfully shot. Great feature!”

NM121 Public Service Reporting

First Place

“Pay-To-Play Politics In Hawaii”

Blaze Lovell

Honolulu Civil Beat

Judge’s Comments: "Revelatory reporting captured in a story with such a palpable heartbeat that I couldn't stop reading. Plus, there was almost an immediate local impact in changing the state law that allowed the pay-to-play norm to embed itself into the community's social fabric in the first place. Really well done."

Second Place

“Wildfire vulnerability series”

Ashley Mizuo, Savannah Harriman-Pote

Hawaii Public Radio

Judge’s Comments: "Gets to the heart of local infrastructure issues. Not just a ‘after the disaster’ series about clean up and ;do better next time’ mentalities. Nice job incorporating people into each piece. "

Third Place

“Private equity now owns nearly 30% of Hawai'i's hotel rooms”

Noelle Fujii-Oride

Hawaii Business

Judge’s Comments: "Excellent explanations of what PE is and why it matters, especially to an economy propped up by tourism dollars. Incredible use of records and explaining to readers how usually secretive and shielded information was found out."

Competition Comments: "Really great work from all outlets in using public records, court documents, research and out-of-state examples when local sources were seemingly unwilling to comment on these important issues. "

NP101 General Information

First Place

"HMSA presents ‘Dear Evan Hansen’ at Manoa Valley Theatre"

Courtney Takabayashi, Marvin Buenconsejo

Hawaii Medical Service Association

Judge’s Comments: “Excellent editing and use of soundbites throughout the piece to keep the viewer interested. Good information on an important topic for young people to use with engaging material.”

Second Place

“hmsa is with you during your time of need”

Courtney Takabayashi, Jay Corsilles, Kevin Allen

Hawaii Medical Service Association

Third Place

”health tips for dancers ... and all humans "

Anna Koethe Pavao, Kevin Allen

Hawaii Medical Service Association

NP102 Feature Information

First Place

”how actor stephen hill is living aloha”

Michelle Liu

Hawaii Medical Service Association

Judge’s Comments: “What a great story! Such a great reminder to embrace volunteer opportunities & to make the most out of every situation. It's so special that he encouraged a student to do well at school and then rewarded them with a fun opportunity as an extra! “

Second Place

“hula at the royal palace”

Craig DeSilva

Hawaii Medical Service Association

Third Place

“Looking Back Is Looking Forward”

Eric Stinton

Eric Stinton

NP103 Opinion

First Place

“inside scoop on your poop”

Craig DeSilva

Hawaii Medical Service Association

Judge’s Comments: “Clear information that's easy to read. Engaging true/false style is conversational & helpful.”

R101 General News/Enterprise Reporting

First Place

“Voting skepticism and party division intensify among Hawai’i's own Elections Commission”

Ashley Mizuo

Hawaii Public Radio

Judge’s Comments: “Excellent use of meeting audio in this piece. And the storytelling peels back layer by layer how the commission works and how it interacts with other pillars of the community. The story has a good push and pull heartbeat and steady flow and kept me engaged. Nice work!”

Second Place

“'I make nothing': Local fishers weigh leaving the industry as inflation drives up costs”

Mark Ladao

Hawaii Public Radio

Judge’s Comments: “Very in-depth look at a complicated issue in just a few minutes. The piece allowed the humans at the center of the story to shine and I appreciated hearing their voices (and their expletives).”

Third Place

“Hawai’i agrees to landmark settlement in youth climate lawsuit”

Savannah Harriman-Pote

Hawaii Public Radio

Judge’s Comments: “Impactful story that succinctly summarizes a complicated lawsuit.”

R102 Feature Reporting

First Place

"Ice Cream Aunties brings joy, sweet treats and healing to Lahaina ?ohana"

Catherine Cluett Pactol

Hawaii Public Radio

Judge’s Comments: “I could feel the positive energy while listening to this story. The calls for ice cream - and the joy in her voice. An excellent feature piece that paints a full picture of a wonderful character. “

Second Place

“Local short film highlights young Micronesian experience in Kalihi”

Cassie Ordonio

Hawaii Public Radio

Third Place

“Repatriation efforts underway for ancient Chamorro stone carvings at Bishop Museum”

Cassie Ordonio

Hawaii Public Radio

S101 Student Investigative Journalism in Any Media

First Place

“Lawmakers Consider Banning Excited Delirium As A Cause Of Death”

Lili Hurd

University of Hawaii

Judge’s Comments: "Incredibly human story with a wide-scope look at the diagnosis, its authenticity and what other communities are doing."

Second Place

“Student Journalists Still Fighting For Press Freedom In Hawai’I”

Aishwarya Behl

University of Hawaii

Judge’s Comments: Great accountability story that ensures public bodies are following their own rules."Again, most of these entries in my opinion do not fit what I would traditionally categorize as investigative journalism. Most of them are traditional news stories ... "

Third Place

“Student Fee Interest Moved to Centralized Campus Account”

Ronan Cook

Ka Leo O Hawaii

Judge’s Comments: "Again, most of these entries in my opinion do not fit what I would traditionally categorize as investigative journalism. Most of them are traditional news stories ... "

S102 Student Breaking News in Any Media

First Place

“Smokey's faces risk of shutting down”

Emma Davidson

Ka Leo O Hawaii

Judge’s Comments: "Great community story that quickly gets to the ‘why?’ and explains ‘so what?’ incredibly clearly.

Second Place

“Kapi'olani Nurse Lockout Leads to Community Arrests”

Emma Davidson

University of Hawaii

Third Place

“Palestine Support Rally marches through UHM Campus”

Paige Lum

Ka Leo O Hawaii

Competition Comments: "None of these fit what I'd consider to be the traditional definition of breaking news. I was anticipating original, fast, accurate reporting that included day-of information on something new to readers. "

S103 Student Feature Journalism in Any Media

First Place

 “ 'It Saved My Life': Surfing Program Is Transformative For People With Disabilities”

Flynn Hamlin

University of Hawaii

Judge’s Comments: “Story is evident of great interviews and even better research. Such care was put into this story and it shows in its construction and organization. “

Second Place

"Coding by day, cha cha by night"

Lucia Peralta

Ka Leo O Hawaii

Judge’s Comments: “So interesting!”

Third Place

“New Mosquito Control Strategy Offers Hope for the Hawaiian Honeycreepers”

Aishwarya Behl

University of Hawaii

S104 Student Sports Journalism in Any Media

First Place

“More Surfers In Hawaii Are Wearing Helmets - A Trend That Could Save Lives”

Justin Gardner

University of Hawaii

Second Place

“O'ahu Esports League spreads goodwill nationally”

Nevan-Isaiah Pak

University of Hawaii

Third Place

“Rich Hill uncorking 2024 Rainbow Baseball”

Tanner Haworth

Ka Leo O Hawaii

S105 Student Journalism Featuring Video

First Place

“Renaming Dean Hall -- Alice Ball”

Lili Hurd

University of Hawaii

Judge’s Comments: “Excellent reporting with solid interviews & information. Alice Augusta Ball is such an important person to remember - great piece. The PKG was also professionally edited and presented - what a wonderful student newscast!”

Second Place

“Ka Papa Lo’i ?o Kanewai keeps kalo local”

Jordan Nunies

University of Hawaii

Third Place

"'Onipa'a, an annual reminder of the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom"

Mackenzie Olivo

University of Hawaii

S106 Student Journalism Featuring Photography

First Place

“Local Motion: Whiskey Dix”

Kiersten Morgan

University of Hawaii

Judge’s Comments: “These images are all very striking. Your use of lighting really sets the scene for the subject of this story. Well composed and great details. “

Second Place

“A treasure glows within the Art Department”

Lucia Peralta

University of Hawaii

Judge’s Comments: "The detail shots, particularly the close ups of the glass making, are incredible. You captured the story well through these photos. "

Third Place

“'Local Motion: Lulumahu Falls'”

Lauryn Johnson

University of Hawaii

Judge’s Comments: “Your images really highlight the beauty of the local scenery. Your use of wide angle shots really help to create dramatic photos. The colors are rich and beautiful.”

S107 Student Journalism Featuring Audio

First Place

“Two local high schools to offer new Filipino history and culture course”

Alyssa Francesca Salcedo

University of Hawaii

Judge’s Comments: “Excellent interview about an important topic. I learned a lot about Filipino history and culture in Hawaii. I enjoyed the conversational style that invites the listener in.”

Second Place

“Big Duos EP 1: UH Esports League of Legends team upsets rival SJSU "

Nevan-Isaiah Pak, Tanner Haworth

University of Hawaii

Third Place

“Studies aren’t the only allure for studying abroad”

Jessica Iwamasa

University of Hawaii

S108 Student Editorial/Opinion Writing

First Place

“News and negativity shouldn't be synonyms”

Emma Caires

Ka Leo O Hawaii

Judge’s Comments: "Strong opinion stated up front and an excellent argument for remembering that journalism should be a ""practice of minimizing harm."" Also love the included reporting to back up your stance. Well done! Keep championing this!"

Second Place

“Is it Time for Native Hawaiian Students to Get Tuition Waivers? “

Jordan Nunies

University of Hawaii

Judge’s Comments: “Good reported and well-supported opinion. Great work.”

Third Place

“Go Back to the Drawing Board”

Robert Kelly

University of Hawaii

Juddge’s Comments: “Excellent example of holding power to account. Well done. “

T101 General News/Enterprise Reporting

First Place

“Dole opposes city's landfill location in 'heart of our pineapple operation'”

Mahealani Richardson, Peter Tang

Hawaii News Now

Judge’s Comments: “Solid reporting on information that people need if they get their drinking water from that aquifer. The storyteller in this piece is engaging and detailed.”

Second Place

“Underwater wreckage linked to WWII”

Bryce Moore

KHON2

Third Place

“The Mysterious Death of Alika Miyashiro”

Allyson Blair, Kaij Lundgren

Hawaii News Now

T102 Feature Reporting

First Place

“Journey to China: Hawaii's Connection”

Stephanie Lum, Corbin Gregory

Hawaii News Now

Judge’s Comments: "This category is the most difficult to judge. These stories have the most heart - but this story made me feel something special. Seeing Stephanie reunite with her family was so captivating. I enjoyed how the story was shot and edited, it felt like I was making the Journey to China as well. I would love to watch more pieces like this - where we learn more about the journalists at the anchor desk."

Second Place

"One year after the Maui wildfires: Stories of survival, rebuilding, and the Aloha Spirit"

Marisa Yamane, Bob Guanzon

KITV-4

Third Place

“Manta Ray Tours Thrills and Debate”

Mahealani Richardson, Peter Tang

Hawaii News Now

T103 Spot News Reporting

First Place

“Maui community implements changes after deadly wildfire”

Gina Mangieri, Jason Sakamoto, Ken Mashiyama

KHON2

Judge’s Comments: “Great job following up on a crucial topic. Hopefully the lessons learned from the tragedy are able to help people moving forward.”

T104 Investigative Reporting

First Place

"Dozens of Oahu drivers arrested, jailed for DUI despite tests showing no alcohol in their systems"

Lynn Kawano, Peter Tang, Monet Sadural

Hawaii News Now

Judge’s Comments: "Wow, incredibly detailed reporting on an eye-opening issue. You know you did a great job in your investigation when the ACLU files a lawsuit and cites your investigation in the case. Congratulations on putting together such a great example of journalism that makes a difference. "

Second Place

“HNN Investigates: Reports of Mishandled Remains”

Allyson Blair, Kaij Lundgren

Hawaii News Now

T105 Series Reporting/Documentary/Special News

First Place

“Priced out of Paradise”

Lynn Kawano, Peter Tang, Monet Sadural, Cienna Pilotin

Hawaii News Now

Judge’s Comments: "This was the most engaging piece to watch in this highly competitive category. The segments are a master class in community driven journalism. I could feel the energy and relationships that have formed on the ‘Ninth Island’ and I will never forget what I learned from this piece. If we stick together and lift each other up, anywhere can feel just like home."

Second Place

“Immigration in Hawaii”

Annalisa Burgos, Alan Johnson

Hawaii News Now

Third Place

“Journey to China: Hawaii's Connection”

Stephanie Lum, Corbin Gregory

Hawaii News Now