



**National Federation of Press Women
2010 High School Communications Competition**

September 2009

NFPW HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS CONTEST GUIDELINES 2009-2010

The National Federation of Press Women's High School Communications Contest inspires students to do their best work, which earns them recognition and reflects well on their teachers and advisers. The National Association of Secondary School Principals has placed the contest on its "NASSP National Advisory List of Contests and Activities," which can be found on the Web site, www.nassp.org.

In the contest, students may enter work in one of 17 categories: Editorial, Opinion, News Story, Feature Story, Sports Story, Columns, Feature Photo, Sports Photo, Cartooning, Review, Graphics, Single-Page Layout, Double-Truck Layout, Environment, Video News Story, Video Feature Story and Video Sports Story. Each winner will receive a certificate, with first-place winners also receiving \$100.

Inquire about state contests early in the school year, because state deadlines are usually in January or February, which allows time for judging and processing for the national contest by the end of March. The student's work must have been completed during the current school year, from March 1, 2009, through February 14, 2010.

National student winners, their parents and advisers are invited to attend the NFPW High School Awards Luncheon, which will be held in September 2010 during the annual NFPW conference in Chicago, Illinois. Some affiliates provide financial assistance to students who attend the conference to accept their awards.

General Requirements for Entries

- Entries must be the work of students enrolled in grades 9-12 during the current school year or the last semester of the senior year for students' work published after the current deadline.
- Students must enter in the affiliate contest for their state. Students may enter as At-Large entries only if their state does not have a contest.
- Participating affiliates are in Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California (Northern & Southern), Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, Nevada, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin and Wyoming. See nfpw.org/competitions.htm for contacts.
- Students may submit one entry per category (except where a category requires multiple samples); students are welcome to enter as many categories as they wish. Students should decide which category best fits, as each piece may only be entered in one category.
- Publication in a high school or community newspaper, printed and/or electronic (online) is eligible; entries created for school television or online broadcast are eligible for video categories.

- For printed publications, submit two tear sheets (**the entire page** on which the article or graphic appears) for each entry (including two copies of each of three columns in the personal column category); either an original or a photocopy is fine. For online publications, submit two copies of the article including the URL and date of publication. For televised or online video, submit a DVD with the entry.
- On print entries, indicate which article or photo is to be considered by circling it with a marker or highlighter.
- If an entry is the work of more than one student, **all** names should be on the entry form.
- Entry forms and student work should be **paper-clipped** together – **NO staples, sleeves or binders, please!**
- Each state contest director should e-mail a “master list” of student entries from your state including student name, hometown/school, category and entry title, along with your entries; entries from state contest directors into the national contest must be postmarked by March 28, 2010.

CRITERIA CONSIDERED BY JUDGES

- 1. Editorial** – This entry would appear on the editorial page of the paper. It is the voice of the paper. An editorial is *not a bylined personal column*, but may be a signed on behalf of an editorial board.
- 2. Opinion** – This is the voice of the writer, not to be confused with an editorial. It can focus on items of personal nature, social issues, or happenings of the world. It can be insightful and/or critical, but not libelous. Judging will evaluate clearness of style, sound reasoning and effort to influence reader’s opinion in what the writer believes is the right direction. An opinion article, the voice of the individual, is always bylined.
- 3. News Story** – Shows initiative in obtaining a story that presents new information or a different angle on published information or past events. Judging will be based on general organization, writing style, readability and impact.
- 4. Feature Story** – An in-depth topic of interest to readers. Copy will be judged on unusual aspects of the material or the handling, writing style and richness of detail and use of quotes, readability and thoroughness. The material may be a personality profile or human interest piece.
- 5. Sports Story** – Imagination and good application of sports-writing style in advance, follow-up, summary or feature coverage of events or sports participants. Avoid play-by-play rehash.
- 6. Columns** – Submit three entries, two consecutive and any third one. Analytical scrutiny, satire or personal comment on general or special subject that entertains and/or educates. May utilize in-depth knowledge, research, study or expertise.
- 7. Feature Photo** – Photo must have viewer emotional response, eye-catching subject matter and storytelling qualities. No posed shots. Judging will be based on the photo’s quality as published. Original prints are not required. Submit two copies of published version. Images must not be digitally enhanced or retouched; cropping, toning, contrast and redeye removal are the only electronic adjustments that are allowed.

8. Sports Photo – Photo should be easy to “read” and cropped for impact. It should show the peak of the action; capture an exciting moment or a storytelling facial expression. No posed shots. Judging is based on the quality of the photo as published. Submit two dated copies of the published version. Images must not be digitally enhanced or retouched; cropping, toning, contrast and re-eye removal are the only electronic adjustments that are allowed.

9. Cartooning – Copy may be generated by computer graphics or freehand and may be a comic strip or cartoon. Judging will consider the text or caption and the use of concept and artistic style. The subject matter is unrestricted. For example, any political, economic or social issue may be covered or any human relations issue or other topic.

10. Review – Entry should be of interest to the publication’s readers. Subject may be art or dramatic event or music. Article should include some critical analysis and show writer’s knowledge of the subject. Review should be interesting, creatively written and rich in style.

11. Graphics – Entry may be created freehand or electronically. Judging will be on creativity, uniqueness, clarity of relationship to article or publications and entry’s visual enhancement of the subject matter. Unsigned work requires adviser’s verification.

12. Single-Page Layout – Copy may be from a desktop publishing project or from the traditional printing production methods. (A double-truck is not a single page.) Judges will consider any number of graphic elements, typography, photos, illustrations and color. Judging will be on creative and effective use of elements in drawing reader interest and supporting article (s) content. Unsigned work requires adviser’s verification.

13. Double-Truck Layout – The entry is a two-page layout (centerfold) incorporating an odd number of pictures made up as a single unit, with the usual margin between the two facing pages eliminated. Judging will be based on same elements as for single-page layout. Unsigned work requires adviser’s verification.

14. Environment – Judging will be based on how the article, layout, graphic or photograph “educates the public about environmental issues or concerns.” This award is given in conjunction with the San Francisco Press Club Environment Award Fund.

15. Video News Story – This is a video created for television or Web broadcast. Judging is based on how well video and reporting/narration are used to obtain a story and present information. DVD is the only allowable format. Make sure your entry plays on a regular consumer DVD player or PC.

16. Video Feature Story – This is a video created for television or Web broadcast. Judging is based on how well video and reporting/narration are used to present a personality profile or human interest story of interest to viewers. DVD is the only allowable format. Make sure your entry plays on a regular consumer DVD player or PC.

17. Video Sports Story – This is a video created for television or Web broadcast. Judging is based on how well video and reporting/narration are used to cover a sports event or participant. DVD is the only allowable format. Make sure your entry plays on a regular consumer DVD player or PC.