



An association of professional communicators

Contact: Helen Plotkin, APW Communications Contest Director
501-626-3043, haplotkin@outlook.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

APW recognizes 2020 contest winners in online presentation

Arkansas Press Women recognized the winners of its professional communications contest during an online presentation on April 25. The awards were presented in a virtual ceremony in light of social distancing requirements to help stem the spread of COVID-19.

Tammy Keith, who recently retired as senior writer for the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette's* River Valley & Ozark Edition and Three Rivers Edition, received the Sweepstakes Award for earning the most honors in this year's contest. Keith also earned the APW sweepstakes award in 2017, 2018 and 2019. She won the National Federation of Press Women Sweepstakes Award in 2017. Her 2020 APW awards include:

Five first-place awards in the following categories:

- Writing > Specialty articles > Hobby, crafts, building, designing, construction for "Maumelle 9-year-old writes anti-bullying book"
- Writing > Specialty articles > Physical health for "Registered nurse marks 50 years at Conway Regional"
- Writing > Specialty articles > Religion for "Russellville Manna House volunteers help 'spiritually, nutritionally'"
- Writing > Specialty articles > Sports for "Morrilton woman with brain cancer starts Go Gray in May 5K"
- Writing > Columns > Humorous for "Counting on chocolate to cure a cough; Surviving sickness, painting project"

Eight second-place awards in the following categories:

- Writing > Specialty articles > Hobby, crafts, building, designing, construction for "Architect, craftsman builds coffin for St. Joseph School Bazaar"
- Writing > Columns > General for "First thoughts to 32 years of marriage; Reporter ready for retirement"

- Writing > Columns > Humorous for “Passport photo is no glamour shot; Finding fashion frustrating”
- Writing > Specialty articles > Business for “ASU honors Heber Springs radio-station owner”
- Writing > Specialty articles > Education for “Retired Conway educators reward girls in math”
- Writing > Specialty articles > Physical health for “Kidney transplant successful”
- Writing > Specialty articles > Social issues for “Angels program provides supplies, support”
- Writing > Specialty articles > Government or politics for “White County 911 center adopts shelter animal”

Eight third-place awards in the following categories:

- Writing > Specialty articles > Education for “Morrilton senior elected national Beta Club president”
- Writing > Specialty articles > Social issues for “The CALL board chairwoman is mother to 8”
- Writing > Specialty articles > Hobby, crafts, building, designing, construction for “Car show benefits foundation for fallen officer”
- Writing > Specialty articles > Education for “Harding dorm mom celebrates 30 years”
- Writing > Specialty articles > Business for “Searcy reaps benefits of Small Business Revolution-Main Street”
- Writing > Columns > Humorous for “July brings memories of Bacon; Waiting for Carol to call on me”
- Writing > Columns > General for “Proud mom sends son off to Spain; Happy birthday to my only ‘little’ brother”
- Writing > Specialty articles > Social issues for “Recovery home helps women overcome addiction”

Nine Honorable Mentions in the following categories:

- Writing > News Story > Print-based newspaper for “Conway Regional to run Hendrix health clinic”
- Writing > Specialty articles > Business for “Searcy woman named chamber’s Volunteer of the Year”
- Writing > Specialty articles > Government or politics for “Maumelle raising money for all-inclusive playground”
- Writing > Specialty articles > Government or politics for “Conway hires diversity, economic-development coordinator”
- Writing > Specialty articles > Sports for “Clinton brother, sister win sports awards”
- Writing > News Story > Print-based newspaper for “Committee formed to consider naming park after leader”
- Writing > Columns > General for “Race honors children’s legacies; Saying goodbye to The Director”
- Writing > News Story > Print-based newspaper for “Couple’s adopted son accused of trying to kill them”

- Writing > Specialty articles > Arts and entertainment for “Award-winning director revamps Pottsville band”

Angelita Faller, News Director at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, was Sweepstakes Runner-up, earning the following awards:

- First in Writing > Feature story > Online publication for “UA Little Rock Alum Creates Dance Troupe To Inspire Deaf, Hard Of Hearing Dancers”
- First in Writing > Specialty articles > History for “UA Little Rock Class Investigates Arkansas’s ‘Other Trail Of Tears’”
- First in Writing > Specialty articles > Science or technology for “Grant Helps Fund Research To Track Perpetrators Of Violent Cyber Flash Mobs”
- First in Writing > Specialty articles > Social issues for “UA Little Rock Student Wins SURF Award To Research Outdated Maritime Law Cited By Lawyers In Missouri Duck Boat Tragedy”
- Second in Writing > News Story > Online publication for “Newly Discovered Historic Records Reveal New Details Surrounding The Elaine Massacre”
- Second in Writing > Specialty articles > Education for “UA Little Rock honors student who died of cancer with posthumous degree”
- Third in Writing > Feature story > Print-based newspaper for “UA Little Rock alum becomes homeowner through university district affordable housing program”
- Honorable Mention in Writing > Specialty articles > Business for “UA Little Rock Student Entrepreneurs Come Out On Top At Arkansas Governor’s Cup”
- Honorable Mention in Writing > Specialty articles > Government or politics for “Study Shows Marijuana Dispensaries Reduce Local Opioid Mortality Rates”
- Honorable Mention in Writing > Specialty articles > Arts and entertainment for “To The Rescue: UA Little Rock Gamers Create Simulation About Saving Dogs At Rescue Shelters”
- Honorable Mention in Writing > News Story > Print-based newspaper for “Elaine 12 inducted into Arkansas Civil Rights Heritage Trail”

Other APW contest winners and the awards they received are:

In the Collegiate competition:

John Brown University students **Rachel Ball, Claire Brownlee, Hannah Lawrence, Jessica Oldenettel, Natalie Rogers, and Andrea Sosso**

- First in Collegiate / Education > Public relations campaign for “Saving Grace NWA Gives Campaign”

Catherine Nolte, student at John Brown University, Managing Editor, *The Threefold Advocate*

- First in Collegiate / Education > Art and design > Design (print or electronic) for “The Life of Christ in Words and Images”

- First in Collegiate / Education > Writing > News for “Brexit delayed for a third time, pushed to January 2020”
- First in Collegiate / Education > Writing > Opinion/Editorial/Reviews for “Mental illness is not a sin”

Nolte also placed in the professional contest:

- Second in Writing > Specialty articles > Religion for “Upperclassmen confront faith crisis at CCCU schools”

Debbie Miller, Assistant Professor at John Brown University, formerly Director of Fundraising and Events at Ozark Guidance

- First in Collegiate / Education > Faculty adviser of student publication, station, or site for “The Threefold Advocate student newspaper”

And, in the Professional Contest, Miller received the following awards:

- First in Writing > Specialty articles > Personal essay for “Letter from the Threefold Faculty Adviser”
- First in Communications Programs and Campaigns > Community, institutional or internal relations for “The Power of Thank You”
- Second in Public Relations Materials > Brochures > Nonprofit, government or educational for “We Love You a Latte”

Other winners in the professional categories include:

Maria Aguilar, student at John Brown University

- Honorable Mention in Writing > Specialty articles > Social issues for “Bentonville citizens protest to relocate Confederate statue”

Terry Austin, editor at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

- Second in Graphics and Design > Page Design > Newspaper for “Page 1, March 3, 2019”

Eric Besson, reporter at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

- Second in Writing > Continuing coverage or unfolding news for “Public Corruption: Jeremy Hutchinson”
 - **Co-entrants:** Lisa Hammersly, Linda Satter, Staton Breidenthal

Bill Bowden, reporter at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

- First in Writing > Feature story > Print-based newspaper for “It Was Top Secret”

Kelly Brant, editor at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

- First in Writing > Specialty articles > Food for “Awesome Sauce”
 - **Co-entrant:** Jeff Gammons
- Second in Writing > Specialty articles > Food for “Yuletide twist”
 - **Co-entrant:** Jeff Gammons

- Third in Writing > Specialty articles > Food for “Whip it good”
 - **Co-entrant:** Staton Breidenthal

Daniel Breen, reporter/anchor at KUAR Public Radio

- First in Radio and Television > Prepared report > Radio for “Protestors Flock To Arkansas Tech In Support Of Re-Naming Controversial Scholarship”

Sally Carroll, writer at the *McDonald County Press*

- Honorable Mention in Writing > News Story > Print-based newspaper for “Friends Seek Justice For Jessica”

Sean Clancy, reporter at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

- Second in Writing > Feature story > Print-based newspaper for “Marking a Tragedy”
- Second in Writing > Specialty articles > Arts and entertainment for “Hiding in plain sight”

Amanda Claire Curcio, reporter at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

- First in Writing > In-depth reporting for “Juvie: Lost Time”

Nikki Dawes, graphic designer at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

- First in Graphics and Design > Graphics for “The Wander”
- Honorable Mention in Graphics and Design > Graphics for “Dive into Lit Fest!”

Stan Denman, designer at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

- First in Graphics and Design > Page Design > Newspaper for “Style cover, April 29, 2019”

Debbie Eckert, writer and owner of Debbie’s Hair Productions

- First in Writing > Books, Short Stories, Verse > Nonfiction Books for Adult Readers > Autobiography or memoir for “Hairspray, Holy Water And The Healing Hand Of God”

Hunter Field, reporter at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

- Third in Writing > Specialty articles > Government or politics for “Pot firm filing”

Debra Hale-Shelton, reporter at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

- Second in Writing > News Story > Print-based newspaper for “Officials: ‘Empire’ is drugs, hate mix”

Wally Hall, Sports Editor at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

- First in Writing > Columns > General for “Like It Is”

Lisa Hammersly, reporter at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

- Second in Writing > In-depth reporting for “Acadia child treatment centers”
 - **Co-entrant:** Ginny Monk
- Second in Writing > Continuing coverage or unfolding news for “Public Corruption”

- **Co-entrants:** Eric Besson, Michael Wickline, and Linda Satter
- Third in Writing > News Story > Print-based newspaper for “Widow's Tax OKed”
 - **Co-entrant:** Frank Lockwood

Eric Harrison, reporter at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

- First in Writing > Specialty articles > Arts and entertainment for “Overpaying the price”
 - **Co-entrant:** Nikki Dawes

Mary Hightower, Chief Communications Officer at the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture

- Second in Writing > Specialty articles > Agriculture, agribusiness, aquaculture for “Farmers waiting, watching for slow-rolling disaster after moving livestock, equipment to higher ground”

Cynthia Howell, reporter at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

- First in Writing > Specialty articles > Education for “LR schools”
- Honorable Mention in Writing > Continuing coverage or unfolding news for “LRSD Education”
 - **Co-entrants:** Tony Holt, Rachel Herzog, Stephen Simpson, Thomas Metthe, John Sykes Jr., Staton Breidenthal

Ashlynn Jenkins, Newsletter Editor at Friends of Arkansas Post National Memorial

- Third in Writing > Publications regularly written by entrant > Newsletter or other non-newspaper publication, non-profit, government, or educational for “Friends of Arkansas Post National Memorial February Newsletter”
- Honorable Mentions in Writing > Publications regularly written by entrant > Newsletter or other non-newspaper publication, non-profit, government, or educational for “Friends of Arkansas Post December, June and September newsletters”

Cary Jenkins, Weddings editor at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

- First in Photography > Photographer-writer for “Glory Days”

Bernadette Kinlaw, columnist at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

- First in Writing > Columns > Informational for “Watch Your Language: Apostrophe”

Gavin Lesnick, staff at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

- First in Web and Social Media > Electronic newsletter > Corporate or for-profit for “*Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* Newsletters”
 - a. **Co-entrant:** Stevie Neilson

Frank Lockwood, reporter at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

- First in Writing > Specialty articles > Government or politics for “Memo reveals attack on Cotton rival”
- Honorable Mention in Writing > Continuing coverage or unfolding news for “Mahony drops out”
 - b. **Co-entrants:** Hunter Field, John Moritz

Philip Martin, critic at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

- First in Writing > Specialty articles > Reviews for “Three chords and the truth”
- Third in Writing > Specialty articles > Arts and entertainment for “The Wonder of it all”
- Honorable Mention in Writing > Specialty articles > Arts and entertainment for “From Podunk and beyond”

Ryan McGeeney, Communications Specialist at University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture

- Honorable Mention in Writing > Specialty articles > Business for “Big jump in Arkansas peanut acreage banking on new buying points within state”
- Honorable Mention in Writing > Specialty articles > Agriculture, agribusiness, aquaculture for “Some rice and soybean growers face latest twist in difficult year”

Maggie McNeary, staff at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

- First in Web and Social Media > Website edited or managed by Entrant > Corporate or for-profit for “ArkansasOnline.com”
 - **Co-entrants:** Gavin Lesnick, Barry Arthur, the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* Staff

Tommy Metthe, staff photographer at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

- First in Photography > Single photograph > News or feature photo for “Blaze sets off fertilizer load; rig driver dies”
- First in Photography > Single photograph > Sports photo for “Marion draws line”
- Third in Photography > Single photograph > News or feature photo for “Ducks from a safe distance”

Fred Miller, Science Editor at University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture

- First in Writing > News Story > Online publication for “New blackberry from Division of Agriculture achieves pinnacle of flavor”
- First in Writing > Specialty articles > Agriculture, agribusiness, aquaculture for “Lab-produced meats face legal hurdles, consumer acceptance challenges”
- Second in Photography > Single photograph > News or feature photo for “Tick Map Study”

Kirkman Montgomery, graphic designer at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

- Third in Graphics and Design > Graphics > Graphics for “Sunken stock”

John Moritz, reporter at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

- Honorable Mention in Writing > News Story > Print-based newspaper for “1st Collins killing details out”

Kristin Netterstrom Higgins, Program Associate at University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service

- First in Public Relations Materials > Brochures > Nonprofit, government or educational for “Arkansas’ Cottage Food Law: What the Law Allows”
- First in Web and Social Media > Social Media Campaign > Nonprofit, government or educational for “LoveARcommunities”
 - **Co-entrants:** Julianne Dunn, Emily Smith
- First in Radio and Television > Special programming > Radio for “Strengthening Our Communities: The Citizen Initiative Process In Arkansas”
- Second in Web and Social Media > Blogs > Nonprofit, government or educational for “Arkansas Senate Wants Term Limits on 2020 Ballot”
- Second in Web and Social Media > Electronic newsletter > Non-profit, government, or educational for “Voters Will Decide Sales Tax Issue; Arkansas Legislature Changes Ballot Process”

Rachel O’Neal, High Profile Editor at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

- First in Writing > Personality profile > More than 500 words for “Laura Landreaux”
 - **Co-entrant:** Jeff Gammons
- Honorable Mention in Writing > Personality profile > More than 500 words for “The Family Business”

Michelle Parks, Director of Communications at Fay Jones School of Architecture and Design, University of Arkansas

- First in Editing for Print or Online Publications > Publications regularly edited by entrant > Magazine/Magapaper for “ReView magazine Winter2018/Spring2019”
- Second in Writing > Personality profile > More than 500 words for “Jackson Wins 2019 AIA Young Architects Award”

Charlotte Purdy, reporter at *DeWitt Era-Enterprise*

- Third in Photography > Photographer-writer for “Blues On The Square”
- Third in Photography > Single photograph > General photo for “Quapaw Pottery”
- Honorable Mention in Photography > Photographer-writer for “American Legion Celebrates 100 Years of Service”
- Honorable Mention in Writing > Specialty articles > History for “25th Annual Ghosts of the Past”

Jeanne Roberts, reporter at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

- Honorable Mention in Writing > Continuing coverage or unfolding news for “Polk County Casinos”

Emily Smith, Community, Professional and Economic Development Program Associate at University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture Research & Extension

- First in Web and Social Media > Blogs > Nonprofit, government or educational for “Breakthrough Solutions Connects Visionary Rev. Arthur Hunt with Grant to Bring Creative Economy to Dumas and Beyond”

Jamie Smith, owner at Jamie's Notebook

- First in Web and Social Media > Blogs > Corporate or for-profit for “The Day Facebook Died (and why it shouldn’t have been your website in the first place)”
- Second in Web and Social Media > Website edited or managed by Entrant > Nonprofit, government or educational for “GiveCamp NWA website”
 - **Co-entrant:** Chris Whittle

Deborah Stanuch, freelance writer

- First in Writing > Feature story > Magazine, newsletter or other non-newspaper publication for “The Generosity of Jeannie”
- Third in Writing > Personality profile > More than 500 words for “Joe Miles Retires from Banking”
- Honorable Mention in Writing > Feature story > Print-based newspaper for “The Mystery of Joseph Bunnell”

Stephen Steed, reporter at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

- First in Writing > Specialty articles > Business for “Dicamba-snitch”
- Third in Writing > Specialty articles > Agriculture, agribusiness, aquaculture for “U.S. pays state farmers”

Celia Storey, editor at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

- Second in Graphics and Design > Graphics for “Finding their Bliss”
- Second in Writing > Specialty articles > History for “Pages from the Past”

Clara Turnage, former reporter at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

- First in Writing > Continuing coverage or unfolding news for “2019 Flooding Coverage”
 - **Co-entrants:** Dale Ellis, Emily Walkenhorst, Stephen Simpson, Thomas Metthe, Staton Breidenthal, David Gottschalk
- First in Writing > News Story > Print-based newspaper for “Lapping of water ends cries for help”
- Third in Writing > Continuing coverage or unfolding news for “Police Shooting”
 - **Co-entrants:** Rachel Herzog, Stephen Simpson, Staton Breidenthal, Mitchell Pe Masilun

Emily Walkenhorst, reporter at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*

- First in Writing > Specialty articles > Green/environmental for “Hog farm proposal garners support”

All awards are for work completed during 2019.

First-place winners in the APW contest advance to the National Federation of Press Women competition if the winners are NFPW members. This year, 30 Arkansas first-place winners competed at the national level. National awards were scheduled to be presented at the NFPW conference in Little Rock in June 2020. To protect the health of its members, the NFPW board has decided to postpone its conference in Arkansas until 2021 and will present the 2020 national awards online.

During the virtual ceremony Saturday, APW's founding member Dorothy Stuck was honored along with long-time APW member Charlotte Schexnayder. Stuck was a charter member and served as president in 1953. Schexnayder became president of APW in 1955 and was elected president of NFPW in 1977. Current APW President Kristin Netterstrom Higgins honored both women and announced the awards in the late-afternoon session.

Arkansas Press Women, an association of professional communicators, was founded in 1949 and has been affiliated with the National Federation of Press Women since 1954. For more information about APW, email Kristin Netterstrom Higgins at arkpresswomen@yahoo.com or visit APW's website at <https://arkpresswomen.wordpress.com/>.