

**UTAH  
HIGH SCHOOL  
FUTURE OF  
JOURNALISM  
AWARDS**



## 5th Annual Futures Awards

### **Introduction:**

The Futures Awards are designed to recognize excellent journalism by Utah high school students. Sponsored by the Utah College Media Alliance in collaboration with the Utah Press Association, the contest is judged by Utah's college journalists, journalism professors and professional journalists. The Futures encourage high school students who show an interest in journalism to pursue their media interests into college.

All entries must have been published or broadcast during the 2020-2021 school year, with the exception of the special category for coverage of the pandemic noted below.

Enter online at [utahcollegemedia.org/futures](http://utahcollegemedia.org/futures)

### **Categories:**

#### **Breaking News - 3 categories: Writing, Photography, Video/Broadcast**

- Breaking news stories and photos should require quick reaction time and should be published in the issue or online or broadcast immediately or quickly following the event. Photos may be stand-alone or attached to a breaking news story. Submit a pdf or permanent link. When submitting a pdf, clearly indicate which story or photo is being submitted. Links to video/broadcast packages can point to a school's website, YouTube (or similar service), or a specific video file.

#### **News - 3 categories: Writing, Photography, Video/Broadcast**

- News stories and photos should have some hard news elements. Enterprise reporting is encouraged. Photos may be stand-alone or attached to a news story. Submit a pdf or

permanent link. When submitting a pdf, clearly indicate which story or photo is being submitted. Links to video/broadcast packages can point to a school's website, YouTube (or similar service), or a specific video file.

### **Sports - 3 categories: Writing, Photography, Video/Broadcast**

- Sports stories should be objective, not columns. Photos may be stand-alone or attached to a sports story. Submit a pdf or permanent link. When submitting a pdf, clearly indicate which story or photo is being submitted. Links to video/broadcast packages can point to a school's website, YouTube (or similar service), or a specific video file.

### **Feature - 3 categories: Writing, Photography, Video/Broadcast**

- Feature stories may cover any topic of interest, including sports. Photos may be stand-alone or attached to a feature story. Submit a pdf or permanent link. When submitting a pdf, clearly indicate which story or photo is being submitted. Links to video/broadcast packages can point to a school's website, YouTube (or similar service), or a specific video file.

### **Opinion - 2 categories: Writing, Video/Broadcast**

- Opinion pieces may be an editorial or an individual column or commentary and be stand alone or part of a regular series. Entries may be on any subject, such as politics, sports, etc. If part of a regular series, please submit at least 3 examples. Submit a pdf or permanent link. When submitting a pdf, clearly indicate which story is being submitted. Links to video/broadcast packages can point to a school's website, YouTube (or similar service), or a specific video file.

### **Illustration/Cartoon**

- Illustrations may be stand alone art or published in conjunction with other content. Cartoons may be political or humorous and be stand alone or part of a series. If part of a regular series, please submit at least 3 examples. Submit a pdf or permanent link. When submitting a pdf, clearly indicate which illustration or cartoon is being submitted.

### **Design - 3 categories: Newspaper, Website, Video Production**

- Overall design or production, including headlines and editing, will be considered. For a newspaper, submit a pdf document of 3 complete issues; one from September or October 2020, one from January or February 2021, and one from a month of your choice. For the website, submit the url. For video production, submit a permanent link to 3 complete broadcast packages; one from September or October 2020, one from January or February 2021, and one from a month of your choice.

### **Headlines - 2 categories: Individual, Staff**

- Headlines entries may be made as an individual or a staff. A single editor who has written at least 5 headlines may submit an individual entry. Multiple editors may

collectively submit a staff entry. For individual entry, submit between 5 to 7 headlines from stories. For staff entry, submit between 8-10 headlines from stories. Each headline should be an individual PDF, but does not need to contain the whole story. It should have enough text to provide context for the headlines. If the story contains related headlines – jump heads, etc. – those are not considered separate entries.

**Podcast - 2 categories: Best Podcast Episode, Best Podcast**

- Best Podcast Episode – Submit no longer than a 10 minute clip of a single episode from the current year. Links to audio episodes can point to a school’s website, a specific audio file, a file share system, or similar.
- Best Podcast – Submit no longer than a 10 minute clip of at least 3 different episodes from the current year. One episode should be from September or October 2019, one from January or February 2020, and one episode of your choosing. Links to audio episodes can point to a school’s website, a specific audio file, a file share system, or similar.

**COVID-19 Special Coverage** - To recognize the extreme circumstances of the last year, schools may enter any content created between March 2020 and the end of the school year in 2021 that specifically deals with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Content may be written stories, video packages, photos, podcasts, special web pages, etc. Please submit a link to a google doc, dropbox folder, or similar where all your content about COVID-19 is saved.

**Best High School Media Program** - One award will be made in each division, based on total points accumulated by each high school. Points will be awarded as follows: 1st place - 6 points, 2nd place - 4 points, 3rd place - 3 points. The high school with the highest score in each division will receive a cash award to be used by the school’s media organization. There must be more than one entry per category for points to be awarded and count towards the Best Program award. If a school sweeps a category, points will only be awarded for the 1st place winner in that category.

**Coverage Cup** - Because of the circumstances of the last year, the Coverage Cup will not be awarded for 2020-2021. Instead, please see the COVID-19 Special Coverage category. The winner of that category will be added to the traveling trophy, and that school will retain the trophy until next year’s competition.

**Judging:**

Judging will be based on overall excellence. Criteria include:

- Accuracy and completeness
- Enterprise and ingenuity
- Adherence to high journalistic standards
- Significance and effectiveness
- Extenuating circumstances
- Clarity, insight and respect for the audience

- Creative use of the medium's unique capabilities
- Adherence to the SPJ Code of Ethics
- Judges will weigh the resources available to the student when selecting the winners.

One winner and up to two finalists will be chosen in each category unless the judges find that the entries do not meet the overall standard of excellence required. No honorable mentions will be awarded. A category may have up to two finalists and no winner if entries do not meet the requirements.

**Divisions:**

6A, 5A, & 4A Schools

3A, 2A, & 1A Schools

**Eligibility:**

- The contest is open to anyone who is enrolled in a Utah high school during the 2020-2021 academic year.
- All entries must have been published or broadcast during the 2020-2021 academic year.
  - As long as the work is uncompensated, the entry may have been published or broadcast in any media outlet, not just high school media. Any entry found to have been compensated work will be disqualified.
- Unpublished manuscripts, classroom exercises and unaired news broadcasts do not qualify. Any work found to be unpublished, unaired or a classroom exercise will be disqualified.
  - A classroom exercise is defined as work assigned for a grade or fulfillment of a course requirement and is not eligible for an award unless it was also published outside of class in the high school newspaper, high school broadcast stations or website.
- Advisers may make entries on behalf of their students.

**General Rules:**

- Entries not originally published or broadcast in English should include English subtitles or an English translation.
- Entries that are incomplete or entered in the wrong division or category will be disqualified. Entrants will be notified as soon as possible of incomplete or incorrect entries in order to allow for corrections if possible. Any entries not corrected within 3 days of notification will be disqualified.
- Entries with invalid or broken links will be disqualified.
- Winning entries may be reproduced or posted on the Utah Press Association website and college media websites for educational or other purposes.
- Each contestant may enter as many categories as desired. There is no limit on the number of entries a school or news outlet may enter.
- Each entry must be accompanied by a \$5 entry fee. It is recommended that each school should pursue funding for award entries from their high school administration. If that

doesn't work or you need any assistance in paying for entry fees, please contact Jake Sorensen at [jake.sorensen@utah.edu](mailto:jake.sorensen@utah.edu) to find out about applying for entry fee grants. A limited number are available.

- Entries should be PDFs of print pages, permanent links of online-only work or uploads or links to video work. Indicate which item on a page, website or newscast should be judged if more than one item appears in the file.
- Be sure the name of each student who worked on the entry is listed on the entry form and spelled correctly.
- Up to four individuals may be named on a team entry; otherwise, the entry must be submitted in the name of the newspaper, magazine, station or online news site.
- Work should be submitted in the correct classification the high school competes in. Division A consists of high schools competing in 6A, 5A, and 4A; Division B consists of schools competing in 3A, 2A, and 1A.

**Deadlines:**

Entries for the Utah High School Future of Journalism Contest are being accepted until April 30, 2021.

**Award Presentation:**

Winners will be recognized during an awards ceremony which will be recorded and made available for schools to watch by May 21, 2021. If desired, UCMA will also work with schools to recognize winners during their end-of-year awards assemblies.

**How to enter:**

For your convenience the Futures are conducted electronically. All entries will be submitted online at the website: [utahcollegemedia.org/futures](http://utahcollegemedia.org/futures)