

85th National Headliner Awards Radio and TV winners

The 85th National Headliner Award winners honoring the best journalism for radio and television stations were announced today. The awards were founded in 1934 by the Press Club of Atlantic City. The annual contest is one of the oldest and largest in the country that recognizes journalistic merit in the communications industry.

The print and online awards will be announced on Monday.

The Best in Show for radio was a story by NPR's Yuki Noguchi titled "Anguished Families Shoulder The Biggest Burdens Of Opioid Addiction."

The judges complimented the story for its "extraordinary and excruciating detail of the physical and financial costs of drug addiction. Information most of us probably have never thought of, but should have."

The Best in Show award for television went to the staff at CBS News' "48 Hours" for a story titled "Click for a Killer."

"From the darkest recesses of the Internet to arrests on various continents, CBS's '48 Hours' leads us on a bizarre yet penetrating investigation into the world of murder for hire," the judges said of the story.

Congratulations to all of this year's winners! Below is the complete list.

RADIO STATIONS

Radio stations newscast, all markets

First Place

"A Blue Wave"

Texas Standard staff

Texas Standard, Austin, Texas

Judges' comments: Good mix of experts with attention paid to diversity and inclusion. Clips and soundbites from reporters and the people whom they interviewed make for a thorough picture of midterm results' who, how and why.

Second Place

WTOP staff

WTOP-FM, Washington, D.C.

Third Place

"WLRN Covers The Marjory Stoneman Douglas Shooting"

WLRN News staff

WLRN News, Miami, Fla.

Radio stations breaking news or continuing coverage of a single news event

First Place

“California on Fire”

KCBS staff

KCBS Radio, San Francisco, Calif.

Judges’ comments: Great production quality. Reporters tell their stories with urgency and compelling interviews that include lots of great descriptions from homeowners and others affected by the fire.

Second Place

“Government Shutdown”

WTOP Staff

WTOP-FM, Washington, D.C.

Third Place

“Capital Gazette Shooting”

WTOP Staff

WTOP-FM, Washington, D.C.

Radio stations feature and human interest story, all markets

First Place

“Spookstock”

J.J. Green

WTOP-FM, Washington, D.C.

Judges’ comments: This story truly captures the quirkiness and secrecy of its subject -- the Central Intelligence Agency -- and its agents and operatives. Underneath a hard shell a big heart is revealed -- but confidentially prevails even as CIA members look to support their own through Woodstock-like concerts no less. Bravo, WTOP!

Second Place

“Oklahoma's' Dream Ballet Reflects National Anxieties — Then and Now”

Jennifer Vanasco, Charles Herman and Wayne Shulmister

WNYC, New York, N.Y.

Third Place

“How Songwriting Helped Two Parkland Students Find — And Share — 'Hope For The Future”

Jessica Bakeman

WLRN News, Miami, Fla.

Radio stations documentary or public affairs

First Place

“Have We Backed Ourselves Into A Corner With Pesticides?”

Kristofor Husted

KBIA, Columbia, Mo.

Judges’ comments: KBIA doesn’t tell a simple farm story. As it introduces listeners to a controversy most have never heard of -- with life and death implications -- it also leaves them with possible solutions to think about.

Second Place

“Samples of WLRN's Sundial Show”

WLRN News staff

WLRN News, Miami, Fla.

Third Place

“Pirate Radio”

David Brown, Leah Scarpelli and Casey Cheek

Texas Standard, Austin, Texas

Radio stations news series

First Place

“Surviving War, But Not The Veterans' Home”

Tony Arnold, Dave McKinney and Alex Keefe

WBEZ Chicago Public Media, Chicago, Ill.

Judges’ comments: WBEZ didn’t just mount an exhaustive effort to tell about the plight of patients exposed to Legionnaires’ disease outbreaks in a veterans’ home, it wrangled with a governor and his administration. The dogged reporting gave veterans’ families and the public some answers and left a governor unable to claim re-election.

Second Place

“The Whole Truth”

Joy Diaz and Leah Scarpelli

Texas Standard, Austin, Texas

Third Place

“Vote Already! WLRN's Guide to the 2018 Florida Ballot”

WLRN News Staff

WLRN, Miami, Fla.

Broadcast radio networks and syndicators newscast

First Place

“CBS News on the Hour”

Deborah Rodriguez and Matt Cherry

CBS Radio News, New York, N.Y.

Judges’ comments: Fast moving, compact, and superbly written newscast. Audio woven seamlessly into presentation.

No second- or third-place award

Broadcast radio networks and syndicators breaking news or continuing coverage

First Place

“Parkland Shooting”

Westwood One news staff

Westwood One

Judges’ comments: Precise and eloquent coverage of the Parkland shooting. Radio at its best: the sound and the actualities tell the story; clear and compelling writing.

Second Place

“Stoneman Douglas”

CBS News Radio staff

CBS News Radio, New York, N.Y.

Third Place

“Hurricane Michael”

Westwood One news staff

Westwood One

Broadcast radio networks and syndicators feature and human interest story

First Place and BEST IN SHOW

“Anguished Families Shoulder The Biggest Burdens Of Opioid Addiction”

Yuki Noguchi

NPR

Judges’ comments: Extraordinary and excruciating detail of the physical and financial costs of drug addiction. Information most of us probably have never thought of, but should have.

Second Place

“How One Colorado Town Is Tackling Suicide Prevention — Starting With The Kids”

Kirk Siegler and Alisa Barba

NPR

Third Place

“A Rural Community Decided To Treat Its Opioid Problem Like A Natural Disaster”

Anna Boiko-Weyrauch and Alisa Barba

NPR

Broadcast radio networks and syndicators documentary or public affairs

First Place

“Heroism in the face of genocide: Chiune Sugihara, the Japanese consul who saved thousands of Jews”

Bill Bradley, Devorah Klahr and Christine Whelan

SiriusXM Radio

Judges’ comments: Astonishing story of a Japanese consular official who saved many lives by writing visas for Jews trying to escape Nazis in Europe. An intriguing piece that not only documents the historical events but the legacy -- bringing us the voices of descendants of survivors.

Second Place

“The Diary of an ‘Undesirable’”

Janice Llamoca, Annie Aviles and Stephanie Lebow

Latino USA, New York, N.Y.

Third Place

“Kept Out”

Reveal from the Center for Investigative Reporting & PRX

Reveal from the Center for Investigative Reporting staff, Emeryville, Calif.

Broadcast radio networks and syndicators news series

First Place

“America's Growing Cop Shortage”

Martin Kaste, Lori Mack and Denice Rios

NPR

Judges’ comments: Insightful coverage of a growing problem -- police departments can’t find enough recruits. The situation has become so acute that one department has erected a billboard in another city. NPR provides a strong narrative and compelling detail, and provides some forward-looking analysis of where we might go from here.

Second Place

“1968: How We Got Here”

NPR Staff

NPR

Third Place

“Hurricane Michael”

Peter King

CBS News Radio, New York, N.Y.

TELEVISION**Broadcast or cable television stations newscast****First Place**

“NewsCenter 5 at 6pm: Merrimack Valley Explosions”

WCVB Staff, Paige Harrison and Gerry Wardwell

WCVB, Boston, Mass.

Judges’ comments: WCVB’s calm yet urgent coverage of the gas explosions in the Merrimack Valley touched all bases, even in the early hours, and quickly telegraphed what would eventually be pinpointed as the cause -- pressure surges in the lines.

Second Place

“KPRC2 News at 6pm: Tragedy In Santa Fe”

KPRC2 News Staff

KPRC2, Houston, Texas

Third place

“11 News at 5:00: Capital Gazette Aftermath”

Claire Blakemore, Gillian Morley and Don Horner

WBAL-TV, Baltimore, Md.

Broadcast or cable television stations coverage of a live breaking news event**First Place**

“The Carr Fire: Survival & Death Inside a Fire Tornado”

Kristen Stone, Katie Nielsen, Bob Horn, and KPIX Staff

KPIX-TV, San Francisco, Calif.

Judges' comments: A lively report about "fireados" and the blasts of heat they create. Compelling video buttressed strong reporting that gave viewers an in-depth look at the growing fire, sending teams to various sites. As the fire grew in unexpected ways, so did the news team's efforts to cover every angle of its effects.

Second Place

"Tragedy in Santa Fe"
KPRC2 News Staff
KPRC2, Houston, Texas

Third Place

"Officer Shot and Killed Serving Warrant"
WCVB Staff, Paige Harrison, Gerry Wardwell
WCVB-TV, Boston, Mass.

Broadcast or cable television stations continuing coverage of a single news event

First Place

"Thrown Under the Bus: Taxpayers and the RTA"
Bill Sheil, Chris Reece and Mary Stiene
WJW-TV, Cleveland, Ohio

Judges' comments: A unique look at how millions of dollars in taxpayer money is wasted. Producers went through great lengths to research, document, connect the dots in some very hidden fraud. As a result of in-depth interviews, fact checking and cross referencing, within months, key executives left or were removed.

Second Place

"State Troopers, Supervisors Arrested in Overtime Scandal"
Kathy Curran, Jonathan Wells and David Hurlburt
WCVB-TV, Boston, Mass.

Third Place

"Digging Deeper: Dying on the Job"
Alexis Shear, Daniel Beals and Jonathan Shelley
WPTA/ABC21, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Broadcast or cable television stations feature, sports or human interest story

First Place

"Stains on the Sidewalk"
Paul Gessler and Jed Gamber
WBFF-TV, Baltimore, Md.

Judges' comments: The viewer is directly launched into Amy Berbert's photography project documenting murder locations in a city, exactly one year to the minute later, for an entire calendar year. The story is told in a compelling way, with well-crafted visuals and tight editing, that begs mention of city murder rates without specifically saying anything about the crisis facing the community. While city leaders, law enforcement and even members of the larger community may have forgotten about these murders, Amy is giving pause to remember each victim one by one.

Second Place

"Eddie's Sign"

Boyd Huppert and Chad Nelson

KARE-TV, Minneapolis, Minn.

Third Place

"Project Baltimore: The Best Kids"

Jeff Keene, Chris Papst, Carolyn Sachse and Dwayne Myers

WBFF-TV, Baltimore, Md.

Broadcast or cable television stations public service

First Place

"Project Baltimore: What Transparency Looks Like"

Jeff Keene, Chris Papst, Carolyn Sachse and Dwayne Myers

WBFF-TV, Baltimore, Md.

Judges' comments: News station Fox45 filed a lawsuit against Baltimore City Schools to demand the release of public records and documentation, previously withheld or substantially redacted, related to a series of internal investigations about grade fixing to inflate course grades and graduation rates. Still in the midst of the legal battle, the station has prompted reaction from government officials, namely via the creation of the Accountability in Education Act of 2018, and the closure of one school. The pursuit for truth is ongoing as the news team continues to inform the public of the unresolved and troubling issues across the entire school district in a series of engaging, explanatory and investigative reports.

Second Place

"Rescuing the Innocent"

Insight with John Ferrugia

Rocky Mountain PBS

Third Place

"Project Hunger"

WTAE staff

WTAE-TV, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Broadcast or cable television stations documentary or series of reports on the same subject

First Place

“Behind the Cameras: The Fall of Dallas County Schools”

Scott Friedman, Jack Douglas Jr. and Jose Sanchez

KXAS-TV, Dallas, Texas

Judges’ comments: KXAS followed the money -- and the trail -- wherever it led from the financially mismanaged Dallas County Schools agency to the streets of New Orleans. While official stonewalling met their reporting efforts, the documents the station relied upon told the sordid story.

Second Place

“Against All Odds”

Eric Hanson, Cortney Kintzer and Julia Manning

KCCI-TV, Des Moines, Iowa

Third Place

“Unlicensed, Unpunished”

Ryan Luby, Brittany Freeman and Mike Erickson, Chad Skinner, Mikayla Ortega and Peter Lipomi

KMGH-TV, Denver, Colo.

Broadcast or cable television stations investigative reporting

First Place

“Double Billing the Badge: The Patrol Car Payback”

A.J. Lagoe, Steve Eckert, Gary Knox and staff

KARE 11, Minneapolis, Minn.

Judges’ comments: KARE continues its startling efforts to protect Minnesota taxpayers’ money spent on police and official vehicles and expose those trying to rip off agencies.

Second Place

“Project Baltimore: Two-Hour Diploma”

Jeff Keene, Chris Papst, Carolyn Sachse and Dwayne Myers

WBFF-TV, Baltimore, Md.

Third Place

“Misjudged”

Lee Zurik, Jon Turnipseed and Nancy Decorte
WVUE-TV, New Orleans, La.

Broadcast or cable television stations business and consumer reporting

First Place

“Lien on Me”

Chris Vanderveen, Chris Hansen and Anna Hewson
KUSA-TV, Denver, Colo.

Judges’ comments: Clear storytelling illuminates a problem that any of us could confront -- emergency surgery that results in unexpected, enormous bills for services that we would have no way of knowing was “out of network” and not covered by insurance. This report carefully documents the origin of the problem, tracks down doctors and attorneys who are part of system that quickly places liens on the property of those who don’t pay bills immediately, and follows legislative action designed to put an end to such practices.

Second Place

“Right Guy, Wrong Answers”

Steve Noviello and Raul Cantu
KDFW-TV, Dallas, Texas

Third Place

“Blind and Behind the Wheel”

Jeff Abell and Clint Jiras
WBFF-TV, Baltimore, Md.

Broadcast or cable television stations health/science reporting

First Place

“Heroin Hearts”

Kay Colby, Kathy McLain, Roger Lumpkin and Lloyd DeGrane
ideastream, Cleveland, Ohio

Judges’ comments: This compelling story takes a fresh look at heroin addiction and how it can eat away at heart valves. A new twist on ways to treat the underlying disease of addiction, as well as better policies to prevent the deadly infections from occurring in the first place.

Second Place

“Distance Delays & Denial: Transplant Troubles”

A.J. Lagoe, Steve Eckert, Gary Knox
KARE 11, Minneapolis, Minn.

Third Place

“Concussion Cover-Up”

Walt Kane, Karin Attonito, Anthony Cocco and Alex Lees
News 12 New Jersey, Edison, NJ

Broadcast or cable television stations environmental reporting

First Place

“NewsChannel 5 Investigates: Toxic School Water”

Phil Williams, Bryan Staples and Michelle Bonnett
WTVF-TV, Nashville, Tenn.

Judges’ comments: An incisive piece of investigative journalism, reporter Phil Williams’ story on toxic levels of lead in Nashville’s Metro school district reminds us of the power of journalism to check unscrupulous officials and to ultimately save lives. This series presents how Phil Williams’ assiduous investigative work held school administrators accountable and pressured the state legislature to institute real legal reform.

Second Place

“Cell Towers for Schools, Not Fire Stations”

Julie Watts, Abby Sterling and Brian Yuen
KPIX-TV, San Francisco, Calif.

Third Place

“Fernald: Radioactive Reality”

Duane Pohlman and Eric Frisbee
WKRC-TV, Cincinnati, Ohio

Broadcast television networks, cable networks and syndicators newscast

First Place

“CBS This Morning: October 18, 2018”

CBS News staff
CBS News

Judges’ comments: An intriguing mix of interviews, breaking news, and investigative work. Important news, compellingly shot and packaged, and providing clear context to national and international events.

Second Place

“World News Tonight with David Muir: Hurricane Michael”

ABC News staff
ABC News

Third Place

“The Lead with Jake Tapper”
The Lead with Jake Tapper staff
CNN

Broadcast television networks, cable networks and syndicators coverage of a major news event

First Place

“Parkland School Shooting”
Staff of NBC News Specials
NBC News

Judges’ comments: “An experienced team brought accurate and level-headed coverage from the beginnings of a school shooting. The piece was particularly impressive because it conveyed such insightful analysis from the early moments where very little was known; the team was fast, but didn’t guess, was analytical but didn’t speculate. A particular strength was the analysis of how, unfortunately, law enforcement has learned from the recent spate of school shootings and was able to incorporate those lessons into their tactical efforts.

Second Place

“The Vote: America’s Future”
Staff of NBC News Specials
NBC News

Third Place

“Hurricane Michael”
ABC News staff
ABC News

Broadcast television networks, cable networks and syndicators continuing coverage of a major news event

First Place

“Inside Yemen: Struggling to Survive”
Marcia Biggs, Javier Manzano, Hamada Hanoura, Morgan Till and Sara Just
PBS NewsHour

Judges’ comments: This report, part of a larger journalistic campaign, explains the complex details succinctly while putting faces and stories in front of the raw numbers that together show the gravity of the situation. The obligatory sick-children-in-hospitals scenes are striking, but only serve to introduce and conclude the presentation, which weaves the narrative through multiple settings and characters working to feed the people of war-torn Yemen.

Second Place

“Bullets to Ballots: MSNBC Weekend Continuing Coverage of the March For Our Lives”
MSNBC Weekend Staff
MSNBC

Third Place

“Parkland: The Fight Forward”
ABC News staff
ABC News

Broadcast television networks, cable networks and syndicators feature, sports or human interest**First Place**

“More Than A Coach”
Blake Berson
CBS Sports Network

Judges’ comments: A deeply moving story with an unusual angle. What started as a profile of a longtime football coach at a Pennsylvania college changed gears abruptly when he was diagnosed with a serious illness. The piece followed the coach’s efforts to inspire the team from his sickbed, and then his deathbed. A superb piece that avoids the trite and the maudlin and instead sheds light on a wonderful legacy.

Second Place

“Declan: My Time on Earth”
ESPN staff
ESPN

Third Place

“Father’s Day”
Harry Smith, Eric Salzman and Tommy Nguyen
Dateline NBC

Broadcast television networks, cable networks and syndicators documentary or series of reports on the same subject**First Place**

“Hope & Fury: MLK, the Movement and the Media”
Andrew Lack, Rachel Dretzin and Phil Bertelsen
NBC News

Judges' comments: A fascinating blend of early film and contemporary interviews closes the circle on the Civil Rights movement 50 years after the death of MLK, expertly told in a long-form NBC special.

Second Place

"Identity"

ESPN staff

ESPN

Third Place

"Al Jazeera Investigations - Cricket's Match Fixers - The Munawar Files"

Al Jazeera Media Network

Broadcast television networks, cable networks and syndicators investigative report

First Place

"The Florida Shuffle"

ESPN staff

ESPN

Judges' comments: Great storytelling in this report that examines casualties of the billion-dollar-rehab industry and insurance fraud that can leave addicts without much of a chance at recovery. Solid reporting shed a timely light on a new angle of a popular topic. Producers humanized the story through the eyes of those who lost loved ones through drugs.

Second Place

"The College Fraternity Crisis"

Andrea Canning, Liz Brown and Justin Smith

Dateline NBC

Third Place

"Whistleblower: Kool Smiles"

Whistleblower staff

CBS News

Broadcast television networks, cable networks and syndicators news magazine program

First Place and BEST IN SHOW

"48 Hours: Click for a Killer"

48 Hours staff

CBS News

Judges' comments: From the darkest recesses of the Internet to arrests on various continents, CBS's "48 Hours" leads us on a bizarre yet penetrating investigation into the world of murder for hire.

Second Place

“ESPN Features - SC Featured - Who Says I Can't”

ESPN Features staff

ESPN

Third Place

“Bringing Down Bill Cosby: Andrea Constand Speaks”

Kate Snow, Marianne Haggerty and Marianne O'Donnell

Dateline NBC

Broadcast television networks, cable networks and syndicators business and consumer reporting

First Place

“Between Tariffs and Trade Agreements: The American Farmer”

Kane Farabaugh

Voice of America TV

Judges' comments: Not a sexy topic, but a vitally important one. A terrific explanatory piece that goes right to the source -- the American farmer -- to explore the complex relationship between agriculture and government. Even-handed, fair, and well-told.

Second Place

“The Extortionists”

CNBC Investigative Unit

CNBC

Third Place

“PBS NewsHour Kept Out”

Aaron Glantz, Emmanuel Martinez and Rachel de Leon

Reveal from The Center for Investigative Reporting & PBS NewsHour

Broadcast television networks, cable networks and syndicators health/science reporting

First Place

“Licensed to Pill”

Lee Zurik, Jill Riepenhoff, Megan Luther and Andy Miller

InvestigateTV

Judges' comments: This special takes us deep into rural America where “medical tourism” means a pain clinic's parking lot is packed with out-of-state cars and patients can get narcotics

prescribed without even meeting the doctor. It is a shocking micro look illustrating the nation's opiate problem.

Second Place

"Mystery Diagnosis"

ABC News staff

ABC News

Third Place

"What's the truth about Zika virus in post-hurricane Puerto Rico?"

Beth Murphy, Marissa Miley, David Ritscher

Reveal from The Center for Investigative Reporting, The GroundTruth Project & PBS NewsHour

Broadcast television networks, cable networks and syndicators environmental reporting

First Place

"Nuclear Fallout"

Lee Zurik, Jamie Grey, Andy Miller and Rebecca Moss

InvestigateTV / Santa Fe New Mexican / ProPublica

Judges' comments: This eye-opening piece exposes how tens of thousands of workers at U.S. nuclear weapons facilities suffer debilitating health effects after radiation exposure, and in some cases are dying. "Nuclear Fallout" is a compelling and vigorous piece of investigative journalism that is critical to finding justice for so many workers wronged while serving the federal government.

Second Place

"Expedition Antarctic"

Arwa Damon, Brice Lainé and Samantha Bresnahan

CNN

Third Place

"CBS This Morning: Climate Diaries"

Mark Phillips, Lynne Edwards and Chris Spinder

CBS This Morning