February 22, 2016

Contact Monica Hill, director of N.C. Scholastic Media Association, 1-888-562-6276, ncsma@unc.edu

State High School Journalist of the Year winners announced

The North Carolina Scholastic Media Association has announced West Henderson High School journalist Ari Sen as the 2016 Rachel Rivers-Coffey North Carolina High School Journalist of the Year.

Sen is the web editor-in-chief for the West Henderson (Hendersonville) school newspaper, Wingspan, which received a second place Best of Show award from the National Scholastic Press Association in November.

Alternates for Journalist of the Year are Becca Heilman of Northwood High School in Pittsboro, Anna Schecterson of East Mecklenburg High School in Charlotte and Morgan Whithaus of Riverside High School in Durham.

Heilman is the managing and online editor of Northwood High’s newspaper, The Northwood Omniscient. Schecterson serves as editor-in-chief of East Mecklenburg’s school newspaper, The Eagle. Whithaus is a co-editor for Riverside High’s newspaper, The Pirates’ Hook.

Since 2001, the North Carolina Press Foundation (NCPF) has funded the annual scholarship award in memory of Rachel Rivers-Coffey, former N.C. Press Association president.

NCPF will award a $3,000 scholarship to Sen. The three alternates will each receive $1,000.

The foundation will also award the winners’ journalism programs. The Journalist of the Year’s program will receive $500. The three alternates’ programs will each receive $250.

Sen will now represent the state in the National High School Journalist of the Year scholarship competition. Winners will be announced April 17 at the National High School Journalism Convention in Los Angeles.
The Rivers-Coffey state scholarships and awards will be presented June 16 at UNC-Chapel Hill during the N.C. Scholastic Media Institute, a summer journalism workshop open to students and teachers across the state.

The North Carolina Scholastic Media Association (NCSMA) is a statewide organization that serves scholastic journalism education and works for its advancement.