

## IN THIS ISSUE:

- 2025 Statewide Contest submission details
- 2025 Journalism Education Fellowship link
- Details about NCSMI and CSJC summer programs



# THE SCOOP

SPRING 2025 / VOL. XXXIII, NO. 2

A Publication of the North Carolina Scholastic Media Association

## UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES:

### 1 CONTESTS

Our annual statewide media contests recognize and showcase the work of students across the state. Visit [ncsma.unc.edu/contests](https://ncsma.unc.edu/contests).

### 2 NCSMI

Our summer Institute immerses journalism programs in any area of high school media. Visit [ncsma.unc.edu/institute](https://ncsma.unc.edu/institute).

### 3 SPORTS JOURNALISM

The Carolina Sports Journalism Camp helps rising juniors and seniors explore a future in sports journalism. Visit [hussman.unc.edu/csjc](https://hussman.unc.edu/csjc).

### 4 FELLOWSHIPS

Our Journalism Education Fellowship Program funds a 1-week, 3-hour graduate summer course for North Carolina journalism educators. See page 4.

JOIN US FOR N.C. SCHOLASTIC MEDIA INSTITUTE. SEE PAGE 4 FOR MORE DETAILS.

## ADAPTING COVERAGE DURING CRISIS

After Hurricane Helene hit Western North Carolina on Sept. 27, 2024, the Watauga High School journalism staffs were out of school for 20 days in Boone.

Mia Llibre, editor-in-chief of *The Powderhorn* newspaper, Lucille Neal, editor-in-chief of *The Spark* literary magazine and Eli Bishop, editor-in-chief of the Watauga 10 sports media outlet, came up with new coverage plans for their publications to reflect the stories of Helene.

### How did your staff pivot coverage after Hurricane Helene?

**Llibre:** When we first got back as a group, we had to meet together before school started because we thought we had to be prompt on this response, let students know and show awareness before we even came back to school. I also had spoken with the superintendent and with some administrators to talk about everything that would affect students. That was something that we were really focusing on, trying to let students be in the know while also sharing stories of resilience and this community coming together.

### What was the biggest challenge the staff faced?

**Llibre:** In *The Spark*, we released a lot of poetry from students, and I think that also served as a way for them to share their experiences.

**Neal:** We really had to shift from covering [the hurricane] more to just letting peo-



Mia Llibre, editor-in-chief, discusses with Brennan Smith, podcast editor, and Rebecca Billette, junior editor, a story for publication. Photo by Chloe Greer, Watauga High Yearbook

ple come to us and tell us what they went through, through their poetry and art, but it was a learning curve.

### How did your staff balance covering Helene's impact while dealing with the aftermath themselves?

**Llibre:** Each member releases about eight stories a year, and we had to restructure that so students would have more time to turn in quality work and settle back in into

this normal routine, or, as much normal as you can. That was one of the things we were trying to change – let students take a breath before going back to interviewing.

### What has been the most impactful or rewarding part of this process?

**Neal:** It really united our whole publication. Because we do three different publications, we were all covering the hurricane, just in our different ways.

## DATES & DEADLINES

**March 1**  
NCSMI 2025 registration opens

**March 29**  
NCSMAA Board Meeting

**April 1**  
Priority deadline for Carolina Sports Journalism Camp

**May 1**  
Final deadline for Carolina Sports Journalism Camp

**May 15**  
Deadline for NCSMA Journalism Education Fellowship application

Deadline for NCSMA 2025 Media Contest entries in online news, broadcast news and radio/podcast

**June 1**  
Deadline for NCSMI 2025 registration

Deadline for NCSMA 2025 Media Contest entries in newspaper, yearbook and literary magazine

**June 16-18**  
NCSMI 2025

**June 25-27**  
Carolina Sports Journalism Camp

**July 13-19**  
Journalism Education Fellowship Program (Teaching Digital Media in the Secondary School)



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NCSMA director ... editor

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## 'Try something new and uncomfortable'

Last semester, two of my English II students picked up a copy of our news-magazine and one of them said, "This is trash – who's going to read all of this?"

Hackles raised, my breath halted. How dare they insult the hard work my journalism students had built? Here these students were criticizing the talents of their peers when I had been fighting these same two students tooth and nail for a single paragraph of the written word.

Lightbulb.

This is our audience.

These are students I truly love and work with daily who might feel on the outskirts of academia, but they are an important part of our school and local community. And they aren't seeing themselves reflected in the newsmagazine.

For years, I have bemoaned the fact that my journalism students' coverage often lends to the AP/Honors track student. Too many of my staff writers only interview their friends or friends-of-their-friends. So many of our features center on the "cool" interests of the college-bound, leaving out large swaths of our student body.

At any given school, there is a group of students not engaged in the school community, but over the past five years, that small group has become large. The pandemic and its aftermath pushed many students away from traditional classroom settings: Students are opting for online programs and college courses, or they are just not showing up to school because the value of education and schools has been gutted in the public eye. So many do not care about their school, let alone about being a part of something bigger than themselves.

It's not our job to make school fun, per se, but it is our job to show that school is worth their time, that they're missing out on something vital by not showing up and not engaging.

While part of my two English students' complaints were that the newsmagazine was print, the other part was not seeing themselves or their interests reflected. These students and the many students in our halls like them feel left out. I don't want to feed elitist rattles

by telling my journalists to ignore that criticism, however triggering in the moment. We need to find both new and tried-and-true ways to engage folks in the school community again, and the journalism class is a perfect place for this.



**ANNA SAUNDERS**  
NCSMAA PRESIDENT

I am challenging my student editors to dig deeper when staffers select stories, to in-turn challenge themselves to spread the word of what is happening in our schools, to our students, and beyond. I'm also challenging myself as a journalism adviser to let go of some of the more traditional story-telling strategies: I want students to try new things and explore new ways of communicating, even when it feels uncomfortable. I'm hoping that vulnerability will rein in students who are not engaged and maybe even show school critics the reality of schools today.

My challenge to you is to do SOMETHING different, to try SOMETHING new and uncomfortable but also to cling to the high bar of quality journalism. We have got to find balance between the old and the new because neither is sustainable on its own, and we need to stick the landing if we want to stay relevant in our schools and society.

## Celebrating stars

Last month we announced Peggy Chen, editor at Green Hope (Cary) High's Falcon, as the 2025 North

Carolina High School Journalist of the Year. Other winners and their schools are listed on page 3. Chen will now compete for a national scholarship to be announced next month in Seattle.



**MONICA HILL**  
NCSMA DIRECTOR

Our annual state competition involves the creation of a portfolio spanning a student's journalistic life, with work submitted in areas such as reporting, leadership, marketing and engagement.

One judge described the 2025 entries as the strongest slate of portfolios he had judged from North Carolina. That's something to celebrate. Hats off to these students' dedicated journalism teachers in school districts from mountains to coast. These student media advisers make these opportunities happen.

### Kudos

Congratulations to five student media outlets, all candidates for national awards.

The Torch yearbook at Athens Drive Magnet High is a Pacemaker finalist, with winners to be announced next month.

Four Crown award publications include three literary magazines: Blue Review at Charlotte Latin School, Blutopia at Gaston Day School and Roars & Whispers at Providence (Charlotte) High.

The fourth Crown will be presented to the Eryr yearbook at Charlotte Latin.

These Crown awards will be presented later this month in New York during the 100th anniversary of the Columbia Scholastic Press Association.

## NATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

# 1

The *National Press Club Journalism Institute* offers scholarship and award opportunities for high school seniors planning to pursue a career in journalism. Seniors who qualify for the scholarships can enter a competition for two scholarships for either \$5,000 or \$20,000. The online application is due on March 16 and the winners will be announced in May 2025.

# 2

The *Quill and Scroll International Honorary Society for High School Journalists* is offering scholarships for seniors in the program planning to major in journalism or a related area of communications. The online application is due on May 9, 2025, and winners will be notified of their award before June 20, 2025.

## STUDENT LEADERSHIP

Students may seek six NCSMA offices during the summer Institute. These students should be rising juniors or seniors who are active on their school's journalism/media staffs and are interested in the improvement of scholastic media throughout the state. They must be able to attend both the 2025 and 2026 summer Institutes. To apply, please visit [ncsma.unc.edu/students](https://ncsma.unc.edu/students).

### OFFICERS' DUTIES

#### NCSMA's president:

- presides at the opening and closing sessions of the Institute;
- works closely with the director during the year;
- serves on the Institute Planning Committee;
- attends two policy-making sessions during the year;
- leads all student activities;
- contributes a column for NCSMA's *The Scoop*;
- gives an Institute activities report;
- conducts the elections for the next year.

#### NCSMA's vice presidents:

- serve on the Institute Planning Committee;
- work with the director and the president to carry out Institute activities;
- attend two policy-making sessions during the year;
- divide the president's duties among themselves, in the event the president is unable to perform these duties;
- conduct the elections for the next year.

### INSTITUTE CAMPAIGN RULES

Only one person from each school may run for an NCSMA office. If a runoff election is needed, candidates may be asked to address Institute participants in a five-minute speech addressing goals for NCSMA.

**Email (to [ncsma@unc.edu](mailto:ncsma@unc.edu)) by June 1.**

## NEWS IN BRIEF

- The North Carolina Scholastic Media Association has announced Green Hope High School journalist **Peggy Chen** as the 2025 Rachel Rivers-Coffey North Carolina High School Journalist of the Year. Chen is the editor-in-chief of the Green Hope High school newspaper, The Green Hope Falcon.

Alternates for Journalist of the Year are **Teresa Fang** of the North Carolina School of Science and Math in Durham, **Sophie King** of Athens Drive Magnet School in Raleigh and **Ella Ogburn** of First Flight High School in Kill Devil Hills. Fang is editor-in-chief of her school's newspaper, The Stentorian. King is the co-editor-in-chief of her school's newspaper, Athens Oracle. Ogburn is co-editor-in-chief of her school's newspaper, Nighthawk News Magazine.

The N.C. Press Foundation will award a \$3,000 scholarship to Chen. 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.

## SEEKING NOMINATIONS

### Principal of the Year

NCSMA and NCSMAA officers recognize how important a principal's role is with the annual Principal of the Year Award.

The principal is nominated by a journalism teacher or publication adviser at his or her school, and that person provides specific evidence of the principal's support as outlined in the following criteria:

- *The principal has served in that position at the school for a minimum of three years.*
- *The principal nurtures scholastic journalism principles, especially the First Amendment rights of advisers and students.*

*For a full list of criteria, view the Summer Institute Guide at [ncsma.unc.edu/institute](https://ncsma.unc.edu/institute).*

### Kay Phillips Distinguished Service Award

NCSMA advisers, associates, students or other school officials may nominate individuals for the Kay Phillips Distinguished Service Award. The award was established by the NCSMAA Executive Committee to honor those who have made significant contributions to scholastic journalism in North Carolina and/or to NCSMA. The award is named in honor of Kay Phillips, former director of NCSMA. Each recipient must have contributed at least five years of service to scholastic journalism.

*Send nomination letters for both the Principal of the Year and Kay Phillips Distinguished Service Awards **by June 1** to: [ncsma@unc.edu](mailto:ncsma@unc.edu).*

The Rivers-Coffey state scholarships and awards will be presented June 16-18 during the N.C. Scholastic Media Institute. The full press release can be found at [ncsma.unc.edu/news](https://ncsma.unc.edu/news).

- High school journalists who aspire to work in media and journalism and who will be seniors in the 2025-26 school year are encouraged to apply for the 2025 **Chuck Stone Program for Diversity in Education and Media** taking place June 22-25 at UNC's Hussman School of Journalism and Media. The program allows students to develop professional skills, collaborate with peers, create multimedia content, receive college and career counseling and connect with journalism and media industry experts. Applications are due by March 21. Visit [chuckstone.web.unc.edu/application](https://chuckstone.web.unc.edu/application) to apply.

- NCSMA offers 12 full-tuition **workshop scholarships** for the Summer Institute. These workshop scholarships cover a student's Institute registration fee. Read the Summer Institute Guide at [ncsma.unc.edu/institute](https://ncsma.unc.edu/institute) to learn more.



High school journalism students and teachers are invited join us at the Hussman School of Journalism and Media at UNC-Chapel Hill for our annual Summer Institute.

The Summer Institute is a three-day residential institute for school groups only. The institute is open to all journalism and media advisers and to students who are rising ninth-graders through 12th-graders.

The 2025 Institute theme is “Raise Your Voice,” designed to encourage scholastic journalists to feel empowered to be advocates for their communities and elevate all student voices.

Participants have the opportunity to meet other scholastic journalists and advisers from across North Carolina and learn from excellent faculty and guest speakers. For more information on the institute, visit [ncsma.unc.edu/institute/](https://ncsma.unc.edu/institute/) to see our Summer Institute Guide.

## 2025 NCSMI DIVISIONS

- Design
- Literary Magazine
- News (Newspaper and Online News)
- Photojournalism
- The Rush Staff
- Broadcast News
- Yearbook
- Advising Student Media

**The Rush** staff of up to 12 advanced students will produce the Institute’s official news site, The Rush. Students who participate in **broadcast news** will produce the Institute’s newscast.

The schedule will include instructional sessions for each division, special guest speakers, award ceremonies and more.

Contact the NCSMA office for more information. Deadline to register is June 1.

Visit [ncsma.unc.edu/institute](https://ncsma.unc.edu/institute) to register



## June 25-27, 2025

Students are encouraged to apply for the 2025 Carolina Sports Journalism Camp held June 25-27. This workshop will include instructional sessions on sports play-by-play, sports writing, sports videography and much more. Students will be housed on UNC-Chapel Hill’s campus.

The Carolina Sports Journalism Camp also includes classroom study and practice in the field and will feature sports reporters and sports personalities. Students take a behind-the-scenes tour of UNC’s sports media facilities. They cover a press conference, write a sports feature story and experience what it’s like to work on a sports media deadline.

**Priority Deadline: April 1**  
**Final Deadline: May 1**  
 Visit [hussman.unc.edu/csjc](https://hussman.unc.edu/csjc) to apply

## APPLY TO NCSMA JOURNALISM EDUCATION FELLOWSHIP

NCSMA’s Journalism Education Fellowship Program is a one-week, three-credit, graduate-level course. The summer 2025 course, *Teaching Digital Media in the Secondary School*, will be taught in a hybrid format July 13-19. North Carolina journalism teachers and media advisers can qualify for free in-state tuition, fees and books through this program. The fellowships are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis.

**The application found on our website requires the following information:** **1)** how you became involved in journalism teaching and publication advising, **2)** year(s) of overall and journalistic teaching experience, **3)** why you would like to take the course and **4)** how you believe that course may fit into your career as a journalism teacher/publication adviser. For priority selection, your application should be received by April 1. For links to online registration, visit <https://ncsma.unc.edu/advisers/>

# 2025 STATEWIDE MEDIA CONTEST INFORMATION

Every year, NCSMA offers critique services and a statewide media contest. The critique services give students and staffs the opportunity to distinguish themselves while getting feedback for improvement. This year, overall entries must be submitted online. Newspaper, literary magazine and yearbook staffs should also ship a copy of their publication for showcase at the summer Institute. All individual entries must be submitted online. Please follow directions carefully. NCSMA offers three tiers of publication contests:



## OVERALL

Overall contests recognize the work of all student media in the state. A flash critique is included with the overall contests.

**FEES:** \$75 per publication.

**REQUIRED?** Yes. In order to enter any of NCSMA's contests, the overall contest materials must be submitted.

**AVAILABLE FOR:** Broadcast news, literary magazine, print news, online news, radio/podcasts and yearbook.

**ENTER BY:** Submitting the "Contest Entry Form" once per publication found at [ncsma.unc.edu/contests](https://ncsma.unc.edu/contests).



## SECTION

Section contests distinguish student media components such as design, advertising, etc. The overall fee covers all sections for each publication.

**FEES:** Included in overall contest entry fee.

**INCLUDED?** Yes. Section contests are automatically included when entering overall contests.

**AVAILABLE FOR:** Broadcast/radio/podcast, literary magazine, print news, online news and yearbook.

**ENTER BY:** Submitting your publication to the overall contest found at [ncsma.unc.edu/contests](https://ncsma.unc.edu/contests).



## INDIVIDUAL

Individual contests give students the opportunity to showcase their individual talents. Students may choose from more than 50 categories.

**FEES:** \$5 per entry.

**REQUIRED?** No. Individual contests are completely optional and not required.

**AVAILABLE FOR:** Broadcast news, literary magazine, print news, online news, radio/podcasts and yearbook.

**ENTER BY:** Submitting the online individual contest form once per publication found at [ncsma.unc.edu/contests](https://ncsma.unc.edu/contests).

### RECEIVED-BY DEADLINES FOR ALL THREE TIERS ARE

#### MAY 15

Broadcast news, online news and radio/podcasts.

#### JUNE 1

Newspaper, literary magazine and yearbook.

Ready to enter? Visit [ncsma.unc.edu/contests](https://ncsma.unc.edu/contests).

### YEARBOOK 2025 INSTRUCTIONS

The 2025 overall yearbook entry must be a collection of PDFs rather than the entire book. Connect and submit the following into one PDF:

1. Cover
2. Front Endsheets, if used
3. Title Page
4. Opening Spread
5. Division Spreads (2)
6. Two Spreads from each of the following: Sports, Clubs, Academics, Student Life (8)
7. People Spreads (2) – one of students and one of staff
8. Sports or Clubs Spread, with group photos (1)
9. Advertising Spread, if applicable (1)
10. Index Spread (1)
11. Colophon section of spread
12. Closing Spread
13. Spreads of Your Choice (up to 5)

For help with the 2025 contest entry process, contact us at [ncsma@unc.edu](mailto:ncsma@unc.edu).

### 2025 INDIVIDUAL CATEGORIES

#### News (print and online)

- news article
- sports article
- feature article
- personality profile
- breaking news
- news photograph
- sports photograph
- feature photograph
- editorial
- cartoon
- graphic
- sports column
- general/editorial column
- entertainment/feature column
- review
- front page design news magazine
- front page design newspaper
- inside page design
- inside spread design
- video/multimedia

#### Literary Magazine

- poetry
- fiction
- feature
- personal essay
- drama
- photography/art layout
- graphic

- poetry layout
- fiction layout
- nonfiction layout
- individual art
- individual photograph

#### Yearbook

- theme copy
- feature copy
- sports copy
- captions (any spread)
- sports captions
- theme spread design
- sports spread design
- feature spread design
- people section design
- feature photograph
- sports photograph
- theme photograph

#### Broadcast News

- spot news
- hard news
- feature news
- sports
- anchor

#### Radio/Podcast

- news story
- feature story
- sports story
- longform program

# OPPORTUNITIES FOR NC JOURNALISM TEACHERS AND MEDIA ADVISERS

## FELLOWSHIP



NCSMA's Journalism Education Fellowship Program allows teachers to enroll in a one-week, hybrid-format summer course with tuition funding provided by the association. The course is a three-credit, graduate-level course.

North Carolina journalism teachers and media advisers can qualify for free in-state tuition, lodging and books through this program. The 2025 fellowships, awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, are valued at \$1,050.

The summer 2025 course will be, "Teaching Digital Media in the Secondary School." This course will allow hands-on learning as well as exploration of teaching methods.

Priority review date is April 1. Deadline to apply is May 15.

**Visit [ncsma.unc.edu/advisers](https://ncsma.unc.edu/advisers) to apply.**

## MEMBERSHIP



NCSMAA membership is free for North Carolina high school and middle school journalism teachers and advisers.

As a member of the NCSMA Advisers Association, you will receive:

- Two issues of The Scoop newsletter and access to NCSMA Now e-newsletter.
- Opportunities for your students to enter yearly statewide contests.
- Access to publication and online news critique booklets and the annual Book of Firsts as a contest participant.

**Visit [ncsma.unc.edu/join-ncsmaa](https://ncsma.unc.edu/join-ncsmaa) to register.**

## LEADERSHIP



NCSMA promotes professional growth of journalism advisers and speaks for scholastic media in matters of curriculum and instruction that affect journalism education.

Advisers who wish to serve as a North Carolina Scholastic Media Advisers Association (NCSMAA) officer or regional representative should contact current president Anna Saunders by email at [absaunders@bcswan.net](mailto:absaunders@bcswan.net).

Saunders will discuss leadership opportunities with advisers during NCSMI. The new slate of officers will be announced on June 18 at UNC-Chapel Hill.

**Visit [ncsma.unc.edu/about-us](https://ncsma.unc.edu/about-us) for more information and to see the 2024-2025 NCSMAA board.**



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