

# Scripps stations earn excellence in journalism awards from Society of Professional Journalists

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**CINCINNATI** – The Society of Professional Journalists has selected two investigative pieces from local TV stations owned by The E.W. Scripps Company (NASDAQ: SSP) as 2019 recipients of Sigma Delta Chi Awards, which recognize outstanding work published or broadcast across the United States in 2019.

WKBW in Buffalo, New York, won in the Investigative Reporting category for [“The Malone Recordings](#): The tapes that brought down a bishop.” The series follows the station’s 2018 [“Fall from Grace”](#) investigation, which worked to uncover child sexual abuse inside the Catholic Church in Western New York and prompted a criminal investigation by The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). “Fall from Grace” won a duPont-Columbia Award in 2019 and was recognized by Investigative Reporters and Editors (IRE), which named the series among the best in investigative reporting from print, broadcast and online media.

“The Malone Recordings,” obtained by WKBW I-Team Chief Investigator Charlie Specht, revealed the diocese’s top leader attempted to conceal sexual misconduct allegations, providing the team with evidence of a church cover-up.

The station’s reporting has since led to the reform of sexual abuse laws in New York State with the passage of the Child Victims Act, which allowed more than 300 survivors in Western New York to seek justice for crimes committed by priests, coaches and other authority figures over the last five decades. In 2019, WKBW’s continued investigation of the Catholic Diocese caught the attention of Pope Francis, who ordered a Vatican investigation into Bishop Malone. One month later, Malone became the first bishop in the 172-year history of the diocese to resign.

Scripps’ KNXV in Phoenix won in the Public Service in Television Journalism category for its 2019 [“Abuse of Force”](#) investigative series, which thoroughly examined misconduct inside a local Arizona police department and exposed a corrupted culture that protected officers and misled the public.

Reported by KNXV’s Dave Biscobing and the ABC15 Investigators, “Abuse of Force,” immediately prompted the FBI to launch a still-ongoing criminal investigation. Arizona’s police certification board also opened disciplinary proceedings and, under the increased scrutiny, multiple police officers retired. The investigation also received first place in this year’s National Headliner Awards competition and a prestigious [U.S. Hillman Prize](#).

“Scripps is tremendously proud of the public service journalism selected by the Society of Professional Journalists,” said Local Media President Brian Lawlor. “Our teams’ extensive commitments to pursuing stories that expose abuses of power, hold authority figures accountable and demand change for their communities is a testament to the critical role local journalism plays in our lives. I commend the I-Teams at both of our stations for their dedication to that mission.”

The judges selected 79 honorees from nearly 1,200 submissions across entries in categories covering print, radio, television and online.

Winners were announced and recognized during a virtual presentation on Friday, June 26, 2020.

### **About Scripps**

[The E.W. Scripps Company](#) (NASDAQ: SSP) advances understanding of the world through journalism. As the nation's fourth-largest independent TV station owner, Scripps operates 60 television stations in 42 markets. Scripps empowers the next generation of news consumers with its multiplatform news network Newsy and reaches growing audiences through broadcast networks including Bounce and Court TV. Shaping the future of storytelling through digital audio, Scripps owns top podcast company Stitcher and Triton, the global leader in technology and measurement services. Scripps runs an award-winning investigative reporting newsroom in Washington, D.C., and is the longtime steward of the Scripps National Spelling Bee. Founded in 1878, Scripps has held for decades to the motto, "Give light and the people will find their own way."

### **Media contact:**

*Kari Wethington, The E.W. Scripps Company, 513-977-3763, [Kari.wethington@scripps.com](mailto:Kari.wethington@scripps.com)*