

Scripps Howard Foundation announces winners of 69th Scripps Howard Awards

June 12, 2022

CINCINNATI – The journalism produced by the 69th Scripps Howard Awards winners has reformed laws, led to public policy changes and helped shine a light on inequality and misinformation.

Presenters announced the winning news organizations and journalists on Sunday, June 12, during a special program airing on Newsy, the national news network owned by The E.W. Scripps Company (NASDAQ: SSP).

The Scripps Howard Awards judges – a panel of veteran journalists and media leaders – selected the 2021 winners from more than 800 entries across 15 categories.

“From managing massive data-driven projects to skillfully telling the intensely personal stories of human beings coping with loss and struggling to overcome injustices, the recipients of this year’s Scripps Howard Awards produced exceptional work in 2021,” said Liz Carter, president and CEO of the Scripps Howard Foundation.

The Scripps Howard Foundation presented \$170,000 in prize money to the winning news organizations and journalists.

During this year’s broadcast, [Newsy gave viewers a behind-the-scenes glimpse](#) of the journalism produced by the finalists.

The Scripps Howard Awards, hosted by comedian Hasan Minhaj, will be rebroadcast on Saturday, June 18, at 8 p.m. Eastern, 7 p.m. Central time on [Newsy](#).

The winners of the 69th Scripps Howard Awards:

Excellence in Coverage of Breaking News: The Tennessean for “The Floods of Waverly” – The newspaper told the heartbreaking stories of residents impacted by the natural disaster and meticulously documented the community’s enormous loss.

Judges’ comments: “The Tennessean’s Waverly Flood coverage featured an exemplary multi-media approach, with stunning surveillance video of the rising tide, photo montages of the town, and well-written articles on the destruction and the victims dealing with it all.”

Excellence in Broadcast Local Coverage, honoring Jack R. Howard: KUSA-TV and KARE-TV for “Prone” – The investigation exposes the dangers associated with law enforcement’s practice of holding a suspect facedown, handcuffed and under the weight of an officer.

Judges’ comments: “This detailed and clearly documented investigation of people who died while being arrested, prone and facedown at the hands of police, found that those deaths led to more than \$145 million in settlements and verdicts long before George Floyd’s death. As far back as 1995, the Justice Department told police to get suspects off their stomachs during arrests.”

Excellence in Broadcast National/International Coverage, honoring Jack R. Howard: ABC News for “Blindsided/Out of Bounds” – The series exposed how the NFL pushed doctors to use race-norming when choosing which former players got paid in the league’s concussion settlement.

Judges' comments: "This powerful series of investigative reports showed a vision and commitment of time and resources. It's an example of reporting that leads to significant change with generational impact. The issue of using race-norming is outrageous and maddening, but reporting like this could help end such practices. We hope the families impacted will finally get the help they deserve. Extraordinary work."

Excellence in Business/Financial Reporting: ProPublica for "The Secret IRS Files" – The series ignited a worldwide debate about wealth and inequality.

Judges' comments: "If you were not outraged by the U.S. tax system before reading this series, you will be when you are done. This kind of courageous and compelling reporting has sparked more than dinner conversations. It has sparked a national conversation about potential changes in the law."

Excellence in Environmental Reporting, honoring Edward W. "Ted" Scripps II: ProPublica, The Texas Tribune and Mountain State Spotlight for "Sacrifice Zones: Mapping Cancer-Causing Industrial Air Pollution" – The data analysis countered years of assurances from environmental regulators and corporate spokespeople that the air being emitted into nearby neighborhoods was safe to breathe.

Judges' comments: "This long and deep investigation makes existing data on air pollution much more useful by allowing people for the first time to focus on their own backyards. The team identified 1,000 hotspots of toxic air pollution and a nationwide pattern of environmental injustice, showing that the estimated level of cancer risk from industrial air pollution in majority-Black census tracts is more than double that of majority-white tracts. The reporters also discovered numerous errors in how companies document their pollution, including one case of a business actually over-reporting its pollution, a disclosure that illustrates the evenhandedness of the project. Citizen groups and other media organizations will long be using the data and mapping tools to help protect the people exposed to this pollution."

Distinguished Service to the First Amendment, honoring Edward Willis Scripps: The Arizona Republic for "Democracy in Doubt" – The investigation showed Arizona's so-called "audit" of ballots was partisan, incompetent and reckless in its conclusions.

Judges' comments: "This work is a display of the true watchdog function that the media is supposed to play. The Arizona Republic was the eyes and ears of the nation, not just Arizonans. This is what democracy looks like."

Excellence in Human Interest Storytelling, honoring Ernie Pyle: The Boston Globe for "Under the Wheel" – An investigation into what Boston police call "dynasty families."

Judges' comments: "Based on three years of correspondence with an inmate raised in a family devastated by decades of violence, (reporter Evan) Allen's haunting narrative in the Boston Globe raised complex questions about the painful legacies we all inherit and pass down, and the difficulty of escaping those patterns."

Excellence in Innovation, honoring Roy W. Howard: The Outlaw Ocean Project for "The Outlaw Ocean Music Project" – This trailblazing experiment aimed to solve one of the daunting puzzles for the future of journalism, how to reach and engage young people.

Judges' comments: "The groundbreaking and innovative approach uses various music genres to get the attention of younger and diverse audiences and draw them to the news stories. The collaboration between two kinds of storytellers – journalists and musicians – touched my soul and pulled at my spirit."

Excellence in Local/Regional Investigative Reporting: Miami Herald for "House of Cards" – The work covering the collapse of Champlain Towers South in Surfside, Fla., effectively demonstrated not only what happened, but why.

Judges' comments: "The Miami Herald's reporting on the collapse of the Champlain Towers was breathtaking -- in its presentation, in its depth and in its storytelling. The reconstruction of the collapse set a new standard for

showing AND telling readers how 98 people lost their lives. The stories leading up to that dramatization laid a solid foundation based on documents, court cases and interviews with survivors and experts.”

Excellence in National/International Investigative Reporting, the Ursula and Gilbert Farfel Prize: ICIJ, The Washington Post and media partners for “Pandora Papers” – The global investigation involved more than 600 journalists at more than 140 news outlets in 117 countries. It prompted 20 investigations, toppled multiple governments around the world, and led to anti-money laundering reform in the U.S.

Judges’ comments: “The mammoth undertaking has been widely hailed as the largest journalistic collaboration in history. Its revelations had a global impact. Several governments were brought down. The disclosures prompted at least 20 official investigations. The scope, complexity and impact of the Pandora Papers is breathtaking.”

Excellence in Multimedia Journalism: Frontline (PBS) for “Un(re)solved” – The multimedia experience includes a serialized podcast, augmented-reality installation and documentary.

Judges’ comments: “Frontline’s ‘Un(re)solved’ project tells the story of the nation’s efforts to address a legacy of racist killings. It combines impactful audio, still imagery, illustrations and a visually amazing interactive design to draw users into what is a deeply reported narrative. This powerful project blew us away.”

Excellence in Opinion Writing: City Hall Columnist Heather Knight for the San Francisco Chronicle – Her columns have forced Bay Area public officials to act on such important issues as rampant drug abuse, homelessness, affordable housing and school board malfeasance.

Judges’ comments: “Heather Knight combines powerful prose with in-depth reporting and forceful viewpoints to challenge the city she loves to do and be better. She provides startling statistics but humanizes the issues through the people she profiles. A good columnist connects with her community. Knight does that -- and more.”

Excellence in Radio/Podcast Coverage, honoring Jack R. Howard: NBC News for “Southlake” – The six-episode narrative podcast tells the personal stories of teenagers and their parents’ experience with racism, homophobia and marginalization. Southlake’s controversy is a piece of the bigger story of the nationwide debates over critical race theory in schools following the 2020 murder of George Floyd.

Judges’ comments: “Episode by episode, journalists Antonia Hylton and Mike Hixenbaugh peel back layers of the Southlake community to reveal the emotions around how to teach about race and religion. Southlake doesn’t hide the uncomfortable or confrontational moments and is an important part of understanding current debates in school board elections across the country.”

Excellence in Visual Journalism: The Associated Press for “The Cost of War” – A definitive account of the destructive 11-day war between Hamas and Israel.

Judges’ comments: “The strength of the story lies in the collaboration. AP Journalists from many different disciplines and time zones worked together to give important context to the impact of the ongoing war on the residents of Gaza. A strong narrative focus on the Nassir family, coupled with moving images by Felipe Dana, sit alongside informative graphics and 3D animations to make The Cost of War an example of what can be achieved through an impressive newsroom effort.”

Impact Award: ICIJ, The Washington Post and media partners for “Pandora Papers” – The massive, data-driven investigation was deemed to have had the greatest impact from the list of 2021 winners. “Pandora Papers” enlightened the globe on how people in powerful positions wield money and power in a way that threatens the survival of fragile democracies. As a result of the investigation, world leaders have been held accountable and voted out of office, governments have collapsed, investigations were launched and money laundering laws have been reformed.

Finalists for the Impact Award: Los Angeles Times – “Extreme Heat’s Deadly Toll”; ProPublica, The Texas Tribune and Mountain State Spotlight – “Sacrifice Zones: Mapping Cancer-Causing Industrial Air Pollution”

The Scripps Howard Foundation, in partnership with the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC), also announced winners for its two journalism education awards:

Teacher of the Year: Dr. Nicole Smith Dahmen – University of Oregon School of Journalism and Communication

Administrator of the Year: David Boardman – Temple University Klein College of Media and Communication

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About the Scripps Howard Foundation

The [Scripps Howard Foundation](#) supports philanthropic causes important to [The E.W. Scripps Company](#) (NASDAQ: SSP) and the communities it serves, with a special emphasis on journalism education, excellence in journalism and childhood literacy. At the crossroads of the classroom and the newsroom, the Foundation is a leader in supporting journalism through scholarships, internships, minority recruitment and development and First Amendment causes. The Scripps Howard Awards stand as one of the industry's top honors for outstanding journalism, and the Foundation's annual "If You Give a Child a Book ..." childhood literacy campaign has distributed more than 500,000 new books to children in need across the nation since 2017. In support of its mission to create a better-informed world, the Foundation also partners with Scripps brands to create awareness of local issues and support impactful organizations to drive solutions that help build thriving communities.