INSTRUCTIONS

⇒ Who can enter? All entries must be submitted by a broadcast station, an educational institution, or an individual student. The categories of Team Multimedia Storytelling – News and Individual Multimedia Storytelling – News can also be entered by organizations that are traditionally print in nature and by online only organizations. Otherwise, no independent professional productions will be accepted.

⇒ Air dates: All entries must have aired during calendar year 2019.

⇒ Number of entries: There is no limit to the number of entries that an entrant may submit.

⇒ Multiple entries: If applicable, a story may be entered in more than one category (i.e. Feature & Best Audio), however, two entry fees must be submitted.

⇒ Online Entries: All entries will be submitted through our online contest website, www.betterbnc.com. NOTE: Entries must be submitted in the form of URL’s—the entry is not uploaded to the contest site. If the entries are not already archived on your station’s website, they can be uploaded to an online hosting site such as You Tube or Kiwi6 or Sound Cloud (audio only). Please be certain that each entry remains online and is not behind a paywall or password protection through the 2020 Midwest Journalism Conference. In addition to the entry itself, we also request that each entry also be accompanied by a 30 second clip that will be used to complete our awards presentation.

⇒ Supplementary material: Supplementary material can be uploaded to the contest site, but judging will be based solely on the broadcast entry.

⇒ Deadline: All online entries must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. EST Friday, January 17, 2020.

⇒ Entry fees: Fees, payable to MBJA are as follows: $40 per professional entry. $30 per student entry.

⇒ Questions: Call MBJA Executive Secretary Christine Paige Diers at (605) 490-3033, or email cpaigediers@gmail.com

⇒ Unless otherwise noted, entries can be edited to fit the maximum allowed length.

MARKET SIZE

TELEVISION (AND PRINT AND ONLINE ORGANIZATIONS WHERE APPLICABLE)

LARGE: Milwaukee, Minneapolis/St. Paul

MEDIUM: Cedar Rapids/Waterloo, Des Moines, Fargo, Green Bay, Lincoln/Hastings/Kearney, Madison, Omaha, Quad Cities, Sioux Falls.

SMALL: Alexandria, Bemidji/Brainerd, Bismarck/Minot/Dickinson, Duluth, LaCrosse/Eau Claire, Mankato, North Platte, Ottumwa, Rapid City, Rochester/Mason City/Austin, Rhinelander,
STUDENTS: Can submit their own entries or college/university can enter on behalf of student(s).

RADIO
LARGE: Four or more full-time newsroom employees.

MEDIUM: Two or three full-time newsroom employees.

SMALL: One or no full-time newsroom employees.

STUDENTS: May submit their own entries or college/university can enter on behalf of student(s).

News staff that operate only within the framework of a network must compete at the large market category regardless of the size of their individual shop. News operations that are part of a network, but operate independently from that network—and at least 75 percent of the news produced is for a local audience—should compete based on the size of their staff. Stations may enter in multiple categories, but must select only one market size.

SPECIAL NOTES ON ENTERING & JUDGING

MARKETS
Program producers or syndicated non-broadcast services must enter in the largest market in which their programs are aired regionally.

SELECTING WINNERS
The judges will select one First Place and up to two Award of Merit winners in each category and market size (where applicable). Although judges are instructed to select as many winning entries as allowed by contest rules, they do have the discretion to select no winners in a category if they feel none are merited. In that event, judges will submit a written explanation of their reason.

Categories

SPOT NEWS
Coverage of an unscheduled event for which there was no advance planning or notice, broadcast or telecast within 24 hours of the event. A single story or composite of all coverage of an event aired within 24 hours may be entered.

Maximum Length: 15 min.

Judging Criteria: Depth of coverage; Information developed in limited time period (under deadline pressure); use of station resources such as graphics, live interviews, audio/video to help the story.

GENERAL REPORTING
Best reporting on a single topic. May be in-depth, investigative, enterprise, or coverage of a planned event used in a regularly scheduled newscast. Single stories or composites are
SPORTS REPORTING
Best sports reporting on a single topic. Will be awarded when merited.
**Maximum Length:** 15 min.
**Judging Criteria:** Significance of the issue; impact on the community; quality.

SPORTSCAST/PROGRAM
A regularly scheduled sportscast or program airing on any day in the contest year.
**Maximum Length:** 60 min.
**Judging Criteria:** Overall content, presentation, writing, editing and use of audio and/or video.

NEWSCAST
A regularly scheduled newscast airing on any day in the contest year. Only one entry is allowed per news organization. Entry will represent the station’s best effort at producing a newscast.
**Maximum Length:** 60 min.
**Judging Criteria:** Overall content, presentation, story selection, writing, editing and use of audio and/or video.

DOCUMENTARY/SPECIAL
Single program scheduled outside of a newscast, showing commitment of the station to a community issue. Support material and results of the effort may be included with the entry.
**Maximum Length:** 60 min.
**Judging Criteria:** Depth of reporting; significance; originality; impact of the project on the community; depth of the station’s commitment to the project; service to the community.

SERIES
Multi-part reports on a single subject or continuing coverage of a single news event, broadcast in a regularly scheduled newscast.
**Maximum Length:** 30 min.
**Judging Criteria:** Significance of the series; depth; originality; public interest.

BROADCAST WRITING
Stations are asked to submit entries and accompanying scripts that demonstrate excellence in writing. The writing must convey the feeling and significance of events to the listener or viewer. It may represent individual or collaborative efforts. Stations may include up to three examples, exactly as broadcast.
**Maximum Length:** 15 min.
**Judging Criteria:** Clear, concise writing that conveys the feeling and significance of events.

HARD FEATURE
A planned story on a news-related topic in which the reporter, producer or photographer put considerable time and effort into the production of the story.
**Maximum Length:** 15 min.
**Judging Criteria:** Quality of writing; use and quality of audio/video; originality.

SOFT FEATURE
A story providing an imaginative and colorful look at an event or
individual(s). Entry may be human interest stories, personality profiles, trend stories, or any other feature that is not breaking news.

**Maximum Length:** 15 min.
**Judging Criteria:** Quality of writing; use and quality of audio/video; originality.

**WEATHER (Television Only)**
Best weather coverage over a 24 hour period. Entrants must submit any two regularly scheduled weathercasts that aired 24 hours apart. Students need only submit one weathercast.

**Judging Criteria:** Content; clarity, accuracy, and overall presentation.

**TALK/PUBLIC AFFAIRS**
The category provides for a variety of locally-produced entries in substance and form, serious or humorous. The subject and format can be anything newsworthy, including talk show, caller interaction, interview, debate, or other broadcasts, live or taped, outside of a regular newscast.

**Maximum Length:** Unedited 15 min.

**SOCIAL MEDIA**
Stations are asked to submit up to 5 examples of functioning, cached or active URLs that demonstrate the exceptional use of social media to further the audience’s understanding of the single news story, news event or news project. Entry may include apps or any other platform that demonstrates the best use of social media in journalism. A written description of how social media was used in coverage of the story, event or project is required.

**Judging Criteria:** Excellence in design, creativity and execution as evidenced by the quality of journalism and the quantity and quality of user engagement.

**INVESTIGATIVE**
This award is given for enterprising investigative reporting by a reporter or team. Entry may be a single broadcast or a series of no more than three parts. This category is for short reports; not documentaries.

**Maximum Length:** 15 min.
**Judging Criteria:** Use of investigative techniques, depth, timeliness, public interest.

**SPORTS PLAY-BY-PLAY**
An unedited aircheck of play-by-play coverage of any sporting event produced by your station. Commercial breaks should be removed.

**Maximum length:** 15 minutes

**AUDIO (Radio Only)**
Best use of audio in a story which places the listener at the scene of an event. Accuracy in conveying story, meaning and impact will be factors in judging.

**PHOTOJOURNALISM (TV)**
Best use of video and sound in a story; best photography.

**CABLE NEWSCAST**
Each Cable system can submit one newscast originally produced for cable.

**Maximum Length:** 60 min.

Cable operators are still eligible to enter under single categories, but will be competing against those stations listed for their market size. In this category only will they compete
solely with each other.

TEAM MULTIMEDIA STORYTELLING - NEWS

NOTE: FOR THIS CATEGORY, PRINT AND ONLINE ORGANIZATIONS ARE ELIGIBLE TO COMPETE. All organizations in each market size will compete against one another (Large Market TV, Large Market Radio and Large Market Other will be a single competition, etc.)

Entries consist of team reporting news coverage that engages online audiences through multiple platforms. The emphasis should be on multimedia storytelling, the quality of journalism and creative use of the medium.

- A team is defined as 2 people to no more than 15 people.
- Entries must be news; they can be based on but are not limited to public affairs, business, science, feature or sports news.
- Entries must be journalism, and may not include dramatization.
- The entry must have been posted on the Web and the entrants must have completed at least three substantial components from the following list: writing, photo, audio slideshow, video, animation, interactivity, Flash, graphics or any other data-driven tools. Entrants also could have used social media, including blogging.
- Entrants must describe each entry’s publishing timeline.
- The entry must have been produced and posted on the Web during calendar year 2019.

INDIVIDUAL MULTIMEDIA STORYTELLING – NEWS

NOTE: FOR THIS CATEGORY, PRINT AND ONLINE ORGANIZATIONS ARE ELIGIBLE TO COMPETE. All organizations in each market size will compete against one another (Large Market TV, Large Market Radio and Large Market Other will be a single competition, etc.)

Entries consist of individual reporting of news that engages online audiences through multiple platforms. The emphasis should be on multimedia storytelling, the quality of journalism and creative use of the medium.

- One project per entrant. Entries are defined as a single piece of journalism executed essentially by one journalist.
- Entries must be news; they can be based on but are not limited to public affairs, business, science, feature or sports news.
- Entries must be journalism, may not include dramatization.
- The entry must have been posted on the Web and the entrant must have completed at least three substantial components from the following list: writing, photo, audio slideshow, video, animation, interactivity, Flash, graphics or any other data-driven tools. Entrants also could have used social media, including blogging.
- The entry must have been produced and posted on the Web during calendar year 2019.