

Todd C. Smith Student Journalist of the Year

DEADLINE: Must be submitted online by Wednesday, Feb. 15



Entries for FSPA's top student honor, the Todd C. Smith Florida Student Journalist of the Year award, will be accepted via the FSPA online contest platform. The specific instructions for accessing the database will be published when the system goes live in mid-January.

The contest is open to Florida students whose publications belong to FSPA. Prizes have been doubled this year, and the first-place winner will receive \$1,000. Runner-up will receive \$600. The third-place winner will receive \$400. All three top finishers will be recognized at the FSPA convention banquet on Friday, April 28 at the Wyndham Orlando Resort.

The Florida winner will compete against other state winners for the Journalism Education Association's national award. The winning student's adviser must be a member of JEA to compete at the national level. Multiple Florida winners have been finalists in recent years.

The SJOY award is Category 72 on Florida's online contest platform. Entrants will need to submit the following items for consideration:

- A portfolio of work, either as a PDF attachment or weblink
- A self-analytical essay, which can be its own attachment or may be embedded into your portfolio
- A resume, which can be its own attachment or may be embedded into your portfolio
- A transcript or counselor statement, including journalism classes taken, grades and current GPA
- An action photo of the applicant involved in some aspect of student media
- Up to three letters of recommendation, combined into a single attachment

The JEA website provides a wealth of information about the SJOY award, including the same rubric Florida's judges will use, samples of past winners and tips to the applicants. NOTE: There is also an application on the JEA website. That is for the Florida winner to utilize later, so please do not complete it at this time.

As noted on the JEA site, work samples in the portfolio should be categorized using the the 11 areas of the JEA curriculum: Design, Editing, Entrepreneurship, Law and Ethics, Leadership and Team Building, Multimedia Broadcast, News Gathering, News Literacy, Photojournalism, Web and Writing.

The site also notes this: "The candidate's goal to impress the judges should be about quality, not quantity. They are encouraged to NOT try and find an example for every one of these categories IF they don't have examples for all of them. These are just the labels to attach to the work they are exhibiting to the judges."

Questions about the SJOY process can be directed to
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