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Scripps Howard Awards announce winners, recognize exceptional American journalism

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CINCINNATI, March 3, 2020 /PRNewswire/ -- With a commitment to enterprising collaborations, tenacious investigations and revealing reporting, the winners of the 67th Scripps Howard Awards represent among the best of journalism from 2019.

SCRIPPS HOWARD AWARDS

SCRIPPS HOWARD FOUNDATION

The Washington Post led this year's winners of the prestigious journalism competition, claiming honors in the Breaking News, Human Interest Storytelling and Investigative Reporting categories, after placing seven finalists in the contest's 15 categories.

An independent panel of industry experts selected the final list of winners in this year's competition from almost 900 entries. The Scripps Howard Foundation will present more than $170,000 in prize money to the winning organizations and journalists at its annual awards show on April 16 in Cincinnati. The event will be streamed live on YouTube and Facebook and rebroadcast April 26 on Newsy. The awards show also will air on Scripps television stations throughout the summer.

"The quality of this year's entries is proof positive that extraordinary journalism prevails and that there are many among us who take their Fourth Estate responsibilities seriously and find ways to persevere," said Liz Carter, president and CEO of the Scripps Howard Foundation. "From national investigations with impact spanning continents to community stories deeply researched and honestly told, the 2019 winners exemplify the strength of American journalism today despite multiple challenges. The Scripps Howard Foundation is pleased to honor these stories and the journalists who persevered to tell them."

The 2019 Scripps Howard Awards winners:

Breaking News: The Washington Post for "The El Paso - Dayton Shooting" – Coverage of mass shootings less than 24 hours apart in El Paso, Texas, and Dayton, Ohio, in which 29 people died.

Judges' comments: "The Post's deep history of covering mass shootings allowed it to put the incidents into a broader context with a graphic history of these shootings back to 1966, exposing their increasing frequency."

Broadcast – Local Coverage: WFAA-TV (Dallas) for "Verify Road Trip: Climate Truth" – Coverage from WFAA's Verify team as it took a viewer along on a road trip to Alaska to help report on climate change.

Judges' comments: "WFAA Dallas turned to the public first by asking viewers to nominate themselves as climate deniers who would be willing to explore the topic with experts and even to take a road trip to Alaska to see, firsthand, the effects of climate change where it is having the biggest impact."

Broadcast – National/International Coverage: FRONTLINE PBS for "Flint's Deadly Water" – An investigative report on an outbreak of Legionnaires disease in Flint, Michigan, occurring at the same time as lead poisoning in the city's water system.

Judges' comments: "FRONTLINE showed the source of its evidence, how it verified the evidence, and it took a break from theatrical confrontations and hype to calmly and thoroughly explain how the system that we all rely on failed completely to protect the public."

Business/Financial Reporting: The Seattle Times for "Boeing's 737 MAX Crisis" – A series of stories covering two deadly crashes of the 737 MAX jet, which also revealed how Boeing misinformed the FAA and airlines on the MAX's automated flight control system.

Judges' comments: "This is an impressive display of reporting and writing that explains to the average reader what happened to these airplanes and why they should care. It also deftly explores the issue of who is to blame and why those who could have stopped this from happening did not act."

Community Journalism: Anchorage (Alaska) Daily News and ProPublica for "Lawless" – An ongoing reporting project focusing on sexual violence and breakdowns in law enforcement across Alaska.

Judges' comments: "'Lawless' was so deeply reported and compellingly presented, state and federal officials have already pledged reforms for Alaska's broken law enforcement system. Solid reporting and data analysis provided historical context, while human interest storytelling and reader involvement put a face on issues such as ethnic disparity, policing failures and lack of transparency."

Environmental Reporting: The Oregonian/OregonLive (Portland) for "Polluted By Money" – Coverage revealing alarming campaign finance connections between local politicians and major corporations that have resulted in serious environmental failures spanning decades.

Judges' comments: "The Oregonian/Oregon Live presents jaw-dropping investigative reporting in the innovative multimedia project. The series crystallizes a staggering amount of data and gives a voice to people who had been ignored by a corrupt, yet legal, system."

Distinguished Service to the First Amendment: The Post and Courier (Charleston, South Carolina) for "'IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO DIE': How Flaws in the South Carolina Prison System Led to 7 Deaths in a Single Night" – Coverage of a deadly prison riot, officials who weren't talking and the cause of the violence.

Judges' comments: "In their old-fashioned, shoe-leather reporting, they got access to confidential audits of the riot and reports about problems within the prison system. A story well reported and well told that forced lawmakers to take action."

Human Interest Storytelling: The Washington Post for "The State of Health Care in Rural America" – Stories about the emerging health crisis in rural America.

Judges' comments: "Extraordinary example of public service journalism through immersion reporting. The reporter gained the trust of sources; from ordinary people who live in flyover country, rural areas where the mainstream media is held in low regard. The ability to get these intimate on-the-record accounts is what distinguishes this work."

Innovation: Newsy for "Newsy+Bellingcat" – An open-source video investigation series from multiplatform news network Newsy and investigative journalism outlet Bellingcat that sheds light on international conflict.

Judges' comments: "The team went to great lengths to make something very complex, very accessible without tripping over itself to show the innovation. In an era when our journalism is constantly being called 'fake,' these journalists showed their work."

Investigative Reporting: The Washington Post for "The Afghanistan Papers: A Secret History of the War" – Coverage that gives a detailed, behind-the-scenes assessment of the Afghanistan War."

Judges' comments: "An epic series that will change the way the history of the Afghanistan War and U.S. foreign policy in the early 21st century is written – forever. The final product is a well-written, comprehensive and elegant piece of journalism that is an extraordinary and definitive draft of our history."

Multimedia Journalism: Vox for "These 3 Supertrees Can Protect Us From Climate Collapse" – Reporting that explains the importance of tropical forests in the battle against climate change, from the perspective of three species of supertrees in Brazil, Indonesia and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Judges' comments: "That something this beautiful and engaging could also be educational and impactful solidifies the No. 1 spot this project deserves. It married great reporting and storytelling with heart-stopping visuals, engaging graphics and the best user experience of anything we saw in this category."

Opinion: Kyle Whitmire of the Alabama Media Group for "Life, Politics and Corruption in Alabama"

Judges' comments: "His columns – a mix of good storytelling and fearless opinion – prick the soft underbelly of the Jim Crow, Jr. South. Whitmire is the linear successor of Eugene Patterson and Ida B. Wells, a fact that bodes well for Alabama and the journalism profession."

Radio/Podcast: The Public's Radio (Rhode Island) for "A 911 Emergency" – Reporting from a yearlong investigation into Rhode Island's inadequate and sometimes dangerous emergency call system.

Judges' comments: "As a result of Arditi's dogged reporting and her use of dramatic 911 calls, state lawmakers approved funding to train all 911 call takers and the acting director of 911 was removed from his post. Emergency medicine physicians have cited this reporting, saying it will save lives."

Topic of the Year: The Impact of Climate Change on Communities: NPR and The University of Maryland Howard Center for Investigative Journalism for "Heat and Health in American Cities" – Coverage revealing the underreported impact of climate change: The link between income, rising heat and health in American cities.

Judges' comments: "Beyond the data, this project brought us into neighborhoods and homes to show how climate change and environmental justice are inextricably tied."

Visual Journalism: Rodrigo Abd of The Associated Press for his photojournalism portfolio.

Judges' comments: "Abd turned his lens toward the Venezuelan famine with intimacy and dignity, demonstrating his extraordinary ability to connect in his stories."

The Scripps Howard Foundation, in partnership with the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, also announced winners

of its two journalism education awards:

Teacher of the Year: Jennifer Thomas – Howard University
Finalist: William H. Freivogel – Southern Illinois University

Administrator of the Year: Susan King – University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Finalist: David Boardman – Temple University

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 excellence in journalism. At the crossroads of the classroom and the newsroom, the Foundation is a leader in supporting journalism education, scholarships, internships, minority recruitment and development, literacy and First Amendment causes. The Scripps Howard Awards stand as one of the industry's top honors for outstanding journalism. The Foundation improves lives and helps build thriving communities. It partners with Scripps brands to create awareness of local issues and supports impactful organizations to drive solutions.

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."

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