

Fall 2017

Northeastern Wisconsin Scholastic Press Association

NEWSPA

UW Oshkosh organizes for spring NEWSPA conference

Nikki Brahm

NEWSPA PR Assistant

The spring 2018 NEWSPA conference will celebrate the 49th anniversary of the organization's beginnings, and feature speakers from various high schools who have gone on to excel within the journalism field.

Just some of the confirmed alumni returning to UW Oshkosh for the annual conference, scheduled for April 18, 2018, include Chicago advertising copywriter Joel Thomas from Oshkosh North High School, NFL associate Writer and editor Alex Gelhar from Oshkosh West High School, WISN-12 associate producer Madison Goldbeck from Plymouth High School, ePower Marketing content specialist Emily Miels from Oshkosh North High School, Ari-

zona News Herald news editor Haley Walters from Hartford Union High School and Gannet designer, Tyler Rimmel from Hartford Union High School.

NEWSPA alumni will present individual sessions, as well as participate in the keynote panel "NEWSPA Alumni: Oh, the Places You Could Go."

Just as exciting as the NEWSPA alumni coming back is that the conference will again return to Reeve Memorial Union as the building's renovations finished this October. The building includes a modernized entrance with innovative designs, such as updated offices and large conference rooms on the second floor that will create a welcoming environment for the conference.

Many of the popular sessions will be back, and all sessions, ex-

cept Photoshop, will be held in Reeve. Photoshop will be held in the Radford Hall Computer Lab.

New sessions to look forward to. Including digital features, finding jobs that haven't been created yet, how and why to hold a summer staff session.

The newspaper critiques will still be available, but not offered during the conference. Critiques by Journalism Professor and Advance-Titan adviser Vince Filak can be scheduled individually at UW Oshkosh, your school or virtually. Advisers can contact NEWSPA Executive Secretary Barb Benish if they are interested in getting an in-person critique.

NEWSPA will also continue to roll out its online contest and membership forms, and will develop an online critique form for feedback on students' submissions.

All feedback forms will be shared with students.



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Letter from the President

Jeff Carter
NEWSPA President

This is the second time I have sat down to try and write a column and have come up blank for an idea. I tried to take a walk, looked through my usual news channels, explored Twitter, and prayed to the muses for some inspiration to fall from the heavens.

As I have heard said in writing, write what you know, and right now I know writer's block. Thus, I decided to write about where to find inspiration, and how you can help students find stories to cover in their high school.

I stress to my newspaper students that every good issue of the paper starts with good stories to write about. This is, of course, easier said than done. The most obvious source for stories is the school calendar. The problem this creates in that many students rely on this as their sole source for story inspiration, and the newspaper becomes a recitation of the events. The stories become bland and the readers become uninterested in the paper.

To be clear, the school calendar is a valid story source that needs to be utilized, but it

cannot be the end. Often I will forbid students from using the school calendar other than the editor-in-chief who I discuss what to look for and what angles to take on events.

Beyond that I have students go to our city website for events that students are involved in, but are not publicized by the school. I have students keep tabs on the local newspapers to see what events are occurring that we could look at from a student's perspective. Depending on the staff, I will sometimes assign students to be responsible for a specific source to keep tabs on during the year.

Often times I will try to get students to discover the unique angle in the typical events. Three times a year our school holds a blood drive, so covering this as an event gets repetitive. I have had writers profile a student donating for the first time or a worker from the Blood Center and how they got into the field. But one angle I enjoyed was when a student wrote the article from the perspective of the blood. That is, the student wrote about what happens to the blood after it is donated, but focused on a single bag to make the story more interesting than simply discussing the process.

The best thing to do, but the hardest to accomplish, is



to have students constantly looking for stories. In order to accomplish this, I need to remind students to be looking for stories on a daily basis for the first month or two of class. I have provided students with templates to fill out or stickers to put in their planner or turn in an idea-a-day method with some success as well.

As a last resort for idea generating, I have the students sit in a circle and ask the question, "What annoys you?" Once you get teenagers (people in general) on a rant, the ideas will flow. It is important to be an active facilitator during this, directing these rants into story ideas. For example, a rant on students walking too slow in the hallway could turn into a feature on the unwritten rules of the hallway, or a fight breaking out during lunch could turn into a story on the training lunch supervisors receive on how to handle conflicts.

The ideas are there; it is simply a matter of finding them.

Investigative journalism helps to better the community

Josh Boeder
Journalism Student

Raquel Rutledge, an investigative reporter for the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel and the 2010 winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Local Reporting, spoke at the 2017 NEWSPA Conference.

Rutledge talked about the importance of investigation in reporting during her session. One thing she emphasized was the importance to hold companies, as well as individual people, accountable for their actions.

"If you are talking about accountability, you have to start naming people," said Rutledge. Investigative journalists are supposed to "shine a light" on what companies are doing, but people are more likely to respond when people are called out by name.

Rutledge said that reporters need to make sure their information is correct and true. "When you

have an idea that you think is true in investigative reporting, always try to prove the opposite," Rutledge said.

It helps to know how something works before you can say it is broken. She said that doing thorough research can lead to more questions and more stories, as well as a better understanding of what you are investigating.

Rutledge stressed the importance of the interview process. She said that reporters should always check the background of the people being interviewed before the interview. This can show that the reporter cares and the person being interviewed might be willing to give more information.

In addition, journalists shouldn't ambush the people they are interviewing with the hard questions at the end, but should ask those hard questions early. She said that doing this could lead to another story and then you would have time during the interview to ask more questions about that new issue.



Several Bay Port High School students from Green Bay who write for their school paper said that this part of Rutledge's presentation was the most helpful. They also said that this would be something that they can take back to their newspaper and use to help better their reporting skills.

Rutledge concluded by talking about sources that may not want to go on the record. She said that if you are specific about why you want your source to be on the record, they will be more likely to agree to it.

Dates to Remember

■ **March 5th**

Newspaper Entry Deadline

■ **April 1st**

NEWSPA Scholarship Deadline

■ **April 4th**

Conference Registration Deadline

■ **April 18th**

Spring NEWSPA Conference

The Exciting World of Public Relations

Abby Reich
Journalism Student

UW Oshkosh students Monica Salmeri and Collin Brault are both PR majors who want to share their love of PR to local high school students. That's why they volunteered to speak at the 2017 NEWSPA Conference.

Their session discussed the public relations field, possible careers and opportunities. They started uniquely using emojis to distinguish common characteristics of public relations professionals. Some of these characteristics included the enjoyment of communication between both large and small groups, love for social media, and a passion for creativity within the field. The activity was used to get people talking and to show how creativity among others in this field will be a common characteristic in a future PR career.

Both Salmeri and Brault are members of Public Relations Student Society of America and are a part of the association's high school outreach program. They both said they wished they were introduced to public relations in high school, and that's why they enjoy reaching out to current high school students and teaching them about the field.

Brault defines PR as "the process of creating a positive public image for a company or brand by means of various media outlets produced by public relations professionals." A PR professional's job could be serving as a channel of communication between a company or brand and the public/media. PR professionals can also be involved in event planning, and

branding through these events and various social media outlets, he said.

PR professionals can hold a variety of jobs. One position that interests both Brault and Salmeri is a social media coordinator. "Social media is a brand new outlet that many companies are really becoming a part of," Brault said. "It would be amazing to be able to have the ability to show the power of a company to consumers through social media outlets such as Facebook and Instagram."

A major decision a PR professional must make is whether to go into corporate or agency work. Salmeri defines cooperate work as "public relations for a company or brand that you work for" such as Apple, Samsung, or even an NFL team such as the Green Bay Packers. Salmeri said she wants to pursue corporate work because she "wants to work for a company she is passionate about and shares the same values" as she does.

Brault, on the other hand, wants to work for an agency. He defines agency work as "a business that performs PR for multiple clients at one time" such as Red Shoes PR or Blue Door Consulting. Brault loves the thought of agency work because "you can take on more clients and have many more experiences under agency work."

So, why pursue PR as a career? Salmeri said, "People should pursue PR if they are outgoing, passionate, and love communicating with others." She also encouraged those who embody these characteristics to check out the field and find the love that she has found.



Photo courtesy of Social Web Tactics

Simple observation, conversation leads to influential short stories

Rachel Schamerhorn
Journalism Student



One conversation. That was all it took for reporter Brady Dennis to get his “300 Words” stories. Dennis is a night reporter whose career first started in Florida, and has now moved on to The Washington Post. In 2004, he began writing “300 Words,” a series of short stories about ordinary people. In order to get his stories, he used observations and a short conversation to get everything he needed to write those 300 words. Shannon Kuehmichel, a certified journalism educator and adviser to the school’s newspaper at Berlin High School, explained how students could create their own “300 Words” stories at the 2017 NEWS-PA Conference. Dennis developed his 300-word stories series, Kuehmichel said, to show that each person has a story that matters. “He highlighted people that otherwise never would make the newspaper,” she said. However, he needed to find an overall theme in each piece that was universal. These themes included love, loss, death, change and new beginnings. “Dennis wanted to capture that person in a moment when readers could say, ‘I understand. I’ve been there.’” Kuehmichel said. Overall, he wanted to tell readers something about the world that matters. Kuehmichel focused on three of Dennis’ stories, including “After the Sky Fall,” “The Main in the Mask” and “For the First Time.” These stories were written well be-

cause of the language he used to describe each, she said. The entry points in each of his stories are intriguing and cinematic. He used a universal theme to drive his stories and made sure to not have showy or complicated language. Keeping it simple has been key for his writing, Kuehmichel said. Dennis used repetition as a structural device to guide his writing, and wrote some to be complicated in the way that they really tug at readers’ heartstrings. He used a historic present tense in these stories, which takes readers back to the past and makes everyone live there as if it is right now. His unexpected endings are what keeps the readers interested in reading another story of his, as well. By following Dennis’ techniques, student writers everywhere can apply them to their own writing. By practicing conversation strategies, they can learn the right way to write a 300-word story. Having the right body language and knowing the right place to interview can help writers to develop that perfect story, she said. All writers need to remember is that one perfect conversation and many observations can turn a simple topic into a 300-word story with impact.

Sports: How to decide to write a news, feature or column

Courtney Swanlund
Journalism Student

Just like with any other kind of story, when writing a sports story there are a few different ways you can do it. Brandon Berg, sports editor for the Chippewa Herald in Chippewa Falls, said, “There are three main types of sports writing: news stories, feature stories and column writing.” If you are putting a story together, there is a pretty good chance that it will fall under news. “News stories can cover a wide variety of things,” Berg said. “If you’re going to a game and writing about it and there is a simple story with the team or organization, it is a simpler way to write.” An example of that would be a team fundraiser. “You aren’t always going to be writing deep stories,” he said, adding that a lot of times you will be covering the basics of who, what, where, when and why. Feature writing is a chance to go more in depth with a subject, Berg said. When writing features, it’s key to have many sources. “The more voices you get on a topic, the better off you are,” Berg said. The third type of sports writing, columns, incorporates the writer’s opinion into the story. “You want to keep your opinion to the minimum,” Berg said, “but this is the way to voice your opinion on a topic.” A good question to ask after an interview is, “Is there anything that I missed?” Berg said, adding that this gives you a chance to hear what the people on the team want to tell you.

Fake news vs. real news: How to dig for the truth

Nikki Brahm
NEWS-PA PR Assistant

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reporter Jim Nelson isn’t a policeman. But as a reporter for PolitiFact, he tries to prosecute a statement and prove it false or true, similar to a crime. Nelson spoke at the 2017 NEWS-PA Conference and explained how PolitiFact works. “We do deep research and we go where the research takes us...” Nelson said. “Often you’ll find both on the left and on the right that their facts are just what their echo chambers have created for them.” Nelson said the truth on politicians is important. “These are our leaders of our country,” he said, “...these are the leaders of our society.” Nelson said that if they aren’t being held accountable, people are being fed lies. Fake news, which often is made up as a joke, is often passed around

and can cause people to start believing it. Thanks to the proliferation of fake news, many news organizations have had to do something to help people achieve some sort of bearings when they hear political statements. “Our job as journalists is to ask questions and to shine light on things,” Nelson said. Nelson explained the process of researching a political statement, which includes using official government sources and looking deeply into cited sources from reports. He said PolitiFact is a transparent source that shows all of its resources to prove a statement false or true. “In almost seven years of running PolitiFact, I’m not aware of any instance where we ‘got it wrong’ and had to re-evaluate a rating,” he said. “I think that’s a pretty solid record.” The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel started using PolitiFact in the summer of 2010, the summer before Gov.

Scott Walker won the election. Nelson also covered the U.S. Senate election where Ron Johnson beat Russ Feingold. Both elections caused readers to become interested in politics, which led Journal Sentinel officials to decide to continue running fact-checking stories, he said. Since the beginning, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel has fact-checked about 1,400 statements and run stories about their findings with PolitiFact. Nelson is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Madison and double majored in economics and political science. He spent three years writing for the school newspaper, The Daily Cardinal, where he wrote concert and record reviews, which lead him to be an editor his senior year. Before working at the Journal Sentinel, Nelson worked at the Stoughton Courier Hub, the Baraboo News-Republic, and the Waukesha Freeman.

One woman creates the Washington County Insider

Danielle Beelow
Journalism Student

Judy Steffes knows that it doesn’t matter how many times you are fired or put down, as long as you get back up. “I was fired 17 times, and each time was fantastic,” she said during the 2017 NEWS-PA Conference. That’s because Steffes, creator and writer for the website, WashingtonCountyInsider.com, has taken the lessons learned and reinvented herself and her craft. “My work ethic is what got me here,” she said, describing how in one year she went from living on unemployment benefits to making more money than she has in a long time thanks to 4 million views on her website, including 200,000

daily views. Steffes started her career in radio sports. It was a little difficult for her to start because when she went to college in the ’80s, few women reported on sports. But she was determined to do it and she did. Steffes had a career at ESPN, where she interviewed many athletes such as Shaq O’Neal and Brett Favre. But after more than three decades in sports reporting, Steffes was let go. She was 50 years old and it was too late for her to start over. But she didn’t give up. “I believed in me,” she said. She started a Facebook page where she would report on news that had not been reported by the mainstream media yet. The Facebook page was a hit. Steffes had

found something she was good at and she knew she could make money doing it. She turned to a close friend and asked for a \$1 million loan. The friend said no and instead put her in contact with someone who could help her create her website so she could continue reporting. “Someone showed me I have potential to do something,” she said. That’s when she created Washington County Insider. “I am a team of one,” she said, but added that she wants to hire more people to grow her company. “Students are unafraid, and that’s why I want to hire them.” Steffes wanted to stress that students should go into journalism because they love it, and not because of the money.

How PR and social media correlate with each other

Brianna Colebourne
Journalism Student

Social media and public relations are connected in more ways than most people think, said Samantha Strong, content associate with Appleton's Red Shoes PR, Inc.

"I am a firm believer that if you can write, then the world is yours," Strong said at the 2017 NEWSPA Conference. "Public Relations is when you have to communicate a clear message to your company's various publics."

PR representatives are image shapers who work to gain positive media coverage. One of the main things to remember when representing a client is if you don't tell your story, then someone else will, and he or she may not get the story 100 percent correct, said Strong, who graduated with a jour-

nalism degree from UW Oshkosh in 2012 and first worked as a writer and reporter before switching to PR and social media.

You have to build trust with clients and local companies in order to earn free publicity and media coverage, Strong said. Social media is the platform where everyone can use the Internet to show people who they are.

Strong emphasized that social media interacts with public relations by representatives managing reputation on social media that is relevant. That means posting correct content and watching to see how the public responds. When managing these social media accounts for clients, you need to keep a company's goals in mind and make sure that every post somehow relates back to the client's goals.

According to Strong, public relations representatives are "glori-

fied copy editors." This is because consultants have to take a client's information already available and transform it into trends that social media has caught wind of.

The biggest choice is deciding which social media outlets best represent specific clients. But looking at the why in social media aspects is also key, Strong said. You need to look at the statistics from all your posts to see how you are growing or failing the company. By keeping track of those statistics, you can more easily remember how to follow the client's goals and then meet them.

Laurin Krekling, who graduated in May 2017 with a PR major from UW-Oshkosh, said Strong's speech was interesting. Learning "how much people use the different social media platforms and how it is a growing part of the industry" was her favorite part of the presentation, Krekling said.

Any experience is good experience in the internship world

Caitlin MacWilliams
Journalism Student

"Give it a good chance before you quit," is the saying Makenna Erdman's family lives by. That advice helped Erdman along the way through many of her internships.

At the 2017 NEWSPA conference, Erdman and Laurin Krekling educated students on how they obtained their internships.

Krekling, who graduated in May 2017 with a major in public relations and a minor in journalism from the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, had internships with the Experimental Aircraft Association and Day By Day Warming Shelter.

While working for EAA, Krekling participated in weekly budget meetings, worked with volunteers, and thanked the companies attending EAA AirVenture. Krekling fully understood how much work goes into the event, as well as how much it really pays off in the end.

The Day By Day Warming Shelter is a small nonprofit where Krekling had the chance to work as an operations specialist intern. Her duties included keeping track of volunteers, writing grants, and creating a newsletter that reached 200 members within the community.

"Any experience is good experience," Krekling said. While her internships might not have been glamorous, they were valuable in what she learned.

Erdman, who also graduated in May 2017 with a major in public relations, received her first internship while in high school. Her internship journey started out with scrounging through tubs of records for hours in the dusty

old attic of the 95.9 KISS FM radio station, to eventually landing a spot on air in the mornings. Having an internship while attending 8 full hours of school and participating in after school sports was a big responsibility for Erdman.

After high school, Erdman spent her summer before college working for the Wisconsin Timber Rattlers. After the first day of being a promotional crewmember, she recalled wanting to quit. But her mom encouraged her to follow their family saying of giving things a good chance and sticking it out for at least two weeks before making a decision, which eventually turned into Erdman returning for four seasons.

Other opportunities Erdman had included being a marketing intern for the Green Bay Packers, becoming a Bucks dancer leading to a game day host, as well as taking a semester off and working for Disney. Erdman worked as an attraction and guest relations' employee while also attending Disney University.

In addition, Erdman holds a temporary position with the Country Music Association where she had a chance to be Brad Paisley's personal assistant for an event.

Erdman encouraged students to maintain connections with former professors and students because many of her internships and jobs were obtained from prior relationships.

Overall, Krekling and Erdman emphasized that landing an internship and realizing it is not for you is also valuable since it can still be a great learning experience.



NEWSPA Scholarship Opportunity

\$

You could win \$500!

\$

Visit

<https://journalism.uwosh.edu/northeastern-wisconsin-scholastic-press-association-newspa/newspa-scholarships/>

for information on how to apply.

Green Bay Packer's photographer shares how to capture the perfect image

Mariah Heyden
Journalism Student

A picture is worth a thousand words, but if you get the perfect shot it can tell an entire story.

Evan Siegle, photographer for the Green Bay Packers, said he needs to maintain a relationship with the team to capture the culture between players and coaches. To do this, he is the first one to arrive on game day, and the last one to leave.

"My job is to be storyteller," Siegle said as he played a slideshow of the Packers "2016 Images of the Year" at the 2017 NEWSPA Conference held at UW-Oshkosh.

It can be difficult to tell a story if the team hits a rough patch in the season: after losing four games consecutively last season, the Packers were 4-6 by week 11. When the team loses, Siegle said he doesn't go near the locker

room, and he will wait on the bus for everyone.

But when the team has a winning game, pep rallies or ceremonies, Siegle said he looks for "the little moments . . . the unexpected things."

Siegle is an accomplished photographer. During his 14 years working for the Green Bay Press Gazette, he took second place in the 2015 Photographer of the Year contest from the Wisconsin News Photographers Association. He was also selected to be part of USA Today's photographer team to capture the 2006 Winter Olympics in Turin, Italy.

Last July, he was pursued by the Packers to become the team photographer, and he now takes photos on and off the field that are used in-house for promotions and marketing.

Siegle said taking pictures for the team is a complete 180-degree turn from taking pictures for

a newspaper. The newspaper tries to show the failures, whereas his new role is to show the success of the players and coaches.

As the audience looked in awe at Siegle's slideshow of his work, they were curious about how he manages to create the perfect image. He said that he takes about 3,000 pictures per game, and it helps to know the sport and the playbook. When he knows what play the team is about to run, he understands where he needs to be to get the right angle.

Emma Hirt, a junior from Hartford Union High School, is interested in sports journalism and enjoyed Siegle's presentation. "It's interesting in the different ways to shoot [a photo]," she said. "I like the idea of telling a story through photos."

You know what they say; photography is the only story that can be understood anywhere in the world.



Photos by Evan Siegle

How to use social media and gain a following

Jordyn Schraeder
Journalism Student

You can't be afraid of hard work if you want your social media to be effective for your newspaper or yearbook.

"It's a lot about the heart that you put into it," said Monica Salmeri. "Social media takes a lot of work to get a following."

Salmeri, a public relations major at UW Oshkosh, and senior journalism student, Nate Proell, gave tips how to run social media accounts for clubs and organizations at the 2017 NEWSPA Conference. Proell writes sports at the Advance-Titan and Salmeri is the president of the UW Oshkosh Public Relations Student Society of America chapter.

The two gave suggestions to help students gain more followers on social media, using incentives like giving out free T-shirts, hanging signs to promote an organiza-

tion's page and making a logo to help identify the brand better.

"Brand is very important when it comes to social media," said Salmeri. She stressed the importance of associating the brand logo with publications and posts, and explained that the method helps to maintain a certain quality for the brand being represented.



"The most important thing when it comes to content is making it relevant to followers," said Proell.

Salmeri added that all social

media posts should serve a purpose and all social media platforms should be relevant to the user and its followers. She used the example of the UW Oshkosh PRSSA chapter not needing a Snapchat account because that platform is not the most effective way to reach its followers.

Salmeri and Proell said it is important to make social media accounts as interactive as possible by tagging accounts and profiles that are relevant to the posted material. As an example, they suggested tagging the football team's Facebook page and the players that were quoted in an article that was linked to the post. This method creates more opportunities for interaction from followers and the followers of the other pages tagged.

Corinne Kronschnabel, a student at Ronald Reagan High School in Milwaukee, was impressed by the information presented by Salmeri and Proell. "Getting yourself out there by tagging other organizations was a great tip," she said.

"People are more likely to care [about the content of the post] if you show that you care," Proell said.

Photos by Graphic Design Junction

HOW TO CREATE EDITORIAL CARTOONS



BY JAMIE BURNS

Illustrating an opinion through editorial cartoons can be a humorous and effective way to convey your message. Learning how to assemble it will allow you to find content that will resonate with readers!

1 THINK ABOUT YOUR MESSAGE

Find a story of your interest to get an idea of what your focus will be. Then think about a certain issue and whether to attack or defend it.



2 SYMBOLISM & EXAGGERATION

Incorporating symbols helps your message represent larger and complex ideas. Exaggeration is often used to incite humor. This is done by highlighting unique physical features or making someone appear in a certain light.



3 CREATE A ROUGH DRAFT

Now that you have an idea of what your focus will be and what elements to use to express it, you can create a basic layout for your cartoon. This will help you get a feel for how it will look visually and figure out how to communicate your message.

4 ADD ANY DIALOGUE

Cartoons use dialogue featured within a speech bubble. These hold your character's inner voice and help further articulate your message.

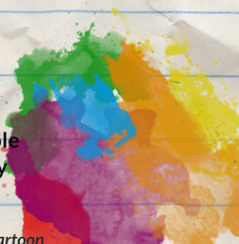


5 DRAW THE OUTLINE

After the rough layout, you can begin to sketch the outline that will make up the completed comic. Start outlining in pencil so you can make changes later on. Once satisfied with your sketch, clean up your lines and finalize the drawing using black ink.

6 ADD ANY COLOR

Adding color helps your comic stand out and can further convey symbolism. You can use coloring tools you are comfortable with such as colored pencils or in this day and age, digitally color it on a computer.



Writing Reviews

Grace Zaplatynsky
Journalism Student

Find your voice and be a little creative, Shane Nyman said in his session on writing reviews at NEWSPA.

"It's the reviews that are expressive and capture one person's point of view and have something creative, something interesting that's going to stay with you more than somebody who really liked the cinematography in a movie," Nyman said.

Nyman works at Post-Crescent Media as an entertainment writer, and has been working there for seven years.

After graduating college, he sent an email to a reviewer from the Press Gazette in Green Bay to say his review on a concert was really good, which resulted in a conversation and an interview for a job, Nyman said.

He said the way he wrote the e-mail tipped his employer off that he was a really good writer, and his experience as a freelance writer there gave him the experience for his job in Appleton.

"There are two key things that I took away from that," Nyman said. "One is that sometimes when you're looking for a job, you just get lucky. But also, with that, I think there is an element of you have the ability to make your own luck."

Nyman said one of the most important things to do in writing was to read and write, especially with reviews to get comfortable with writing them.

"If you're a writer and you're not an avid reader, it's really difficult to improve as a writer," he said.

The more a person reads and consumes, the more he or she gets comfortable with different kinds of language and absorbs sentences and different words, Nyman said.

He said sometimes while a reviewer is listening, watching or reading something, they will hear a line that they can use in their review.

"Once you do it a few times, your ear just gets better and better, and something will grab you right away, and you'll think, 'oh, I can use that,'" Nyman said.

Anything someone writes and publishes is a representation of themselves, especially in 2017, whether it's an email or a post on social media, Nyman said.

Local students win new Pulitzer Prize competition at NEWSPA conference

Nikki Brahm
NEWSPA PR Assistant

Four high school students placed in the first-ever Pulitzer Tradition writing contest at the 2017 Northeastern Wisconsin Scholastic Press Association Conference in UW Oshkosh.

Natalie Britt and Tehya Wachuta, both seniors from Plymouth High School, placed first for their entry, "World War II veteran, former prisoner of war Edgar Kuhlow shares story with community." The two shared the \$500 cash prize.

Britt and Wachuta work on the high school newspaper, Hi-Lights, where Britt started a political column and Wachuta has held a variety of roles, including assistant editor-in-chief, feature editor, in-depth reporter and copy editor.

Lucas Cleary, Plymouth High School newspaper adviser, said Britt and Wachuta have been dedicated staff members for three years. "For each issue of Hi-Lights, they put in countless hours of planning, interviewing and designing. They are especially passionate about in-depth reporting and finding truth. I'm proud of how far they've come, and I'm pleased to see that they're both continuing their journalism studies after graduation," Cleary said.

Britt will attend UW-Oshkosh and Wachuta will attend the University of Minnesota Morris. Britt also received the \$500 NEWSPA/Wisconsin Newspaper Association scholarship.

In second place and receiving a \$300 cash prize was Grace McMillen from Cedarburg High School with her entries, "Graduate

raises awareness for world poverty through documentary," and "Anderson's Relearn Foundation continues to provide supplies to children in need."

Heather Vande Sande, the newspaper adviser from Cedarburg High School, said McMillen has been a devoted editor of the Common Sense staff for the past two years. "People probably do not realize how much writing and editing she does behind the scenes without receiving any credit, so I'm glad her own story was recognized by the judge as one of the best," Vande Sande said.

Rachel Terry from Neenah High School placed third with her story, "Cancer: A Mother's Will to Survive," and received a \$200 cash prize.

Neenah High School Satellite adviser Beth Plankey said Terry is a talented writer. "Rachel honed her writing skills in the Pulitzer tradition and honored her mother, who is a cancer survivor, with a story about

her," she said. "As a journalist, Rachel writes stories that engage the reader. Her attention to detail as she unfolds the survivor's story makes us feel connected and smarter."

All entries were judged by Raquel Rutledge with the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel who won the Pulitzer Prize in 2010 for her "Cashing in on kids" series.

While NEWSPA holds a conference and contests each year, the Pulitzer Tradition writing competition was a one-time collaborative effort with the Wisconsin Humanities Council and the Pulitzer Prizes Board to honor the centennial of the Pulitzer Prizes.

This year, more than 400 students representing 25 high schools attended the conference, and about 500 first-, second-, third- and fourth-place honors were awarded to high school journalists in NEWSPA's usual newspaper and yearbook contests at the closing award ceremonies.



In the Pulitzer Tradition writing contest winners were announced at the 2017 Northeastern Wisconsin Scholastic Press Association Conference on April 26 at UW-Oshkosh. From left, are Tehya Wachuta of Plymouth High School with first place; Grace McMillen of Cedarburg High School with second place; judge and Pulitzer Prize winner Raquel Rutledge, Rachel Terry of Neenah High School with third place; and Natalie Britt of Plymouth High School who shared first-place honors.



NEWSPA president Jeff Carter and scholarship winner Natalie Britt celebrate the student scholarship award.



Photo by: Alicia Kahl

Matt Smith, winner of the Skip Zacher Friend of Scholastic Journalism award, gives a presentation at the NEWSPA conference.

Milwaukee Journal Setinal reporter Mark Johnson (left) and photographer Gary Porter (right) give a keynote speech on their 2011 Pulitzer Prize.



Photo by: Alicia Kahl

Carrissa Brzezinski (right) presents the UWO journalism program to students at their exhibit table.



Photo by: Alicia Kahl



Keynote speakers Mark Johnson and Gary Porter address the crowd of student journalists at the 2017 NEWSPA conference.

Anne Noeldner and Cindy Wandschneider, Walsworth representatives, give out bling at their exhibit table.





2017-18 Board Members

Jeff Carter, President (2020)

The Hartford Chronicle (newspaper)
Hartford High School
805 Cedar St., Hartford, WI 53027
262-670-3272
jeff.carter@huhs.org

Susan Carlson (2018)

The Hi-Light (newspaper)
Green Bay East High School
1415 E. Walnut St., Green Bay, WI 54301-4305
920-448-2090
scarlson@greenbay.k12.wi.us

Lucas Cleary (2018)

Hi-Lights (newspaper)
Plymouth High School
125 S. Highland Ave., Plymouth, WI 53073-2599
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Jason Cummings (2018)

North Star (newspaper)
Oshkosh North High School
1100 W. Smith Ave., Oshkosh, WI 54901-1896
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Michele Gaestel (2020)

The Hi-Light (newspaper)
Green Bay East High School
1415 E. Walnut St., Green Bay, WI 54301
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mlfarnsworth@gbaps.org

Amy Karoses (2019)

Notebook (yearbook)
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375 N. Eagle St., Oshkosh, WI 54902-4294
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amy.karoses@oshkosh.k12.wi.us

Shannon Kuehmichel (2018)

Red 'n' Green (newspaper)
Berlin High School
222 Memorial Dr., Berlin, WI 54923-1252
920-361-2000, ext. 1815
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Sara Marquardt (2019)

Reflections (yearbook)
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1100 W. Smith Ave., Oshkosh, WI 54901-1896
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Beth Plankey (2020)

The Satellite (Online Newspaper)
Neenah High School
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Aaron Ramponi (2020)

Noctiluca (newspaper)
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Matt Smith (2019)

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Heather Vande Sande (2019)

Common Sense (newspaper)
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