

## Spring 2021 Contest Information

FSPA is excited to announce its latest slate Spring Digital Contests, including Quick Turns and Journalist of the Year awards. Welcome back to our longtime participants and welcome to our new ones! The database is now open for submissions. [Instructions for submitting entries are on page 8.](#)

Please note, students must observe applicable copyright laws in all categories. Works that violate copyright will be disqualified.

**Quick Turn Contests (Categories 69-85, page 5) -- These contests will be conducted Feb. 1-5, with uploads due by 8 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 5.** Students will create work based on specific prompts that will be released at 6 p.m. Eastern on Sunday, Jan. 31. See FSPA website and social media platforms for details.

[Submit to digital contest database Feb. 1-5 \(By 8 p.m. Eastern\)](#)

**Todd C. Smith Florida Student Journalist of the Year (Category 93, page 7) -- Due by Sunday, Feb. 7**

[Submit to digital contest database by Feb. 7 \(By 11:59 p.m.\)](#)

**Emerging Young Journalist (Category 92, page 6) -- Due by Sunday, Feb. 21**

[Submit to digital contest database by Feb. 21 \(By 11:59 p.m.\)](#)

**Journalist of the Year Awards (Categories 86-91, page 6) -- Due by Sunday, Feb. 21**

[Submit to digital contest database by Feb. 21 \(By 11:59 p.m.\)](#)

**NEW!** Artist of the Year  
Broadcast Journalist of the Year  
Designer of the Year  
Multimedia Journalist of the Year  
Tom Pierce Photojournalist of the Year  
Writer of the Year

**Spring Digital Contests (Categories 1-68, pages 2-5) -- Due by Sunday, Feb. 28 by 8 p.m. Eastern time**

[Submit to digital contest database starting in early January](#)

**Publication Critiques (Instructions on FSPA website) -- Entries due by Monday, March 1**

[Complete entry forms on the FSPA website starting Feb. 1](#)

Broadcast (Submit URLs of three episodes of your news program)  
Newspaper/Newsmagazine (Submit PDFs of *up to* three issues from this school year)  
Online Media (Submit a URL of your publication website)  
(NOTE: Yearbook and Lit Mag critiques are conducted in May/June)

### Convention Contests

[More information to come closer to our April 2021 virtual convention](#)

### Questions?

Reach FSPA Evaluations Coordinator Joe Humphrey at [fspacevents@gmail.com](mailto:fspacevents@gmail.com) or (813) 380-7195.

# Spring 2021 Digital Contests

**Unless noted, each entry costs \$7. Some categories are free. Some categories are \$10.**

**Unless noted, entries are due by 8 p.m. Eastern time on Sunday, Feb. 28.**

**Unless noted, each publication can submit **five** entries per category.**

**You will be invoiced via the FSPA website in March for all entries. FSPA membership is required.**

While there are labels above the categories below, students from different platforms can enter across the board. For example, newspaper students may submit short stories, broadcast students may enter photography, etc. However, students should belong to the staff under which their work is being entered. Do not submit work under another publication's account. Middle school publications are welcome to enter all categories, but only middle school students may enter middle school categories.

Spring digital and quick turn categories are scored on five criteria, with a 1-10 score for each. (Link to criteria will be added soon). Entries can earn a rating of All-Florida, Excellent or Honorable Mention. One All-Florida entry in each category is selected as Best of the Best, with those winners announced in April.

**This document will be updated with submission instructions once the database opens in mid-January.**

## WRITING

For text categories, submit a PDF or published web link. Please **DO NOT SUBMIT** Word documents.

**1. Campus News Story:** A single written news story about news on your campus. This may also include investigative, in-depth reporting.

**2. Off-Campus News Story:** A single written news story about an event/issue off campus or one that localizes a local, state, national or international topic. This may also include investigative, in-depth reporting.

**3. General Feature Story:** A single written feature story (not a profile).

**4. Entertainment Feature Story:** A single written feature story about an entertainment topic (not a profile).

**5. Middle School Copy:** A single article, review or column written by a middle school student.

**6. Student Profile:** A single written profile about a student or group of students. Take special care to separate profile stories from work that would fit better under news story. A profile is typically a feature that gives you an in-depth glimpse into a person's life.

**7. Non-Student Profile:** A single written profile about a non-student or group of non students. Take special care to separate profile stories from work that would fit better under news story. A profile is typically a feature that gives you an in-depth glimpse into a person's life, whereas a story simply announcing the hiring of a new principal may be more appropriately be considered a news story.

**8. Sports Profile:** A written profile about a person or

group of people, related to sports. See Category 6 for guidance on what constitutes a profile.

**9. Sports Game Coverage:** A single written story that covers one sporting event.

**10. Sports Feature:** A single written feature story about sports; may be an issue or trend piece but should not be a profile.

**11. Editorial:** A single unsigned editorial that reflects the voice of a publication's staff on an issue of importance. (This is not a personal column/commentary).

**12. Commentary-Campus:** A personal column that represents the viewpoint of the author about an on-campus topic. Can be humorous or serious. Only one side of a point-counterpoint should be submitted in an entry.

**13. Commentary-Off-Campus:** A personal column that represents the viewpoint of the author about an off-campus topic. Can be humorous or serious. Only one side of a point-counterpoint should be submitted in an entry.

**14. Review:** A critical commentary of a movie, television program, book, restaurant, play, concert, etc. May be in a non-traditional story form.

**15. Yearbook Copy:** A single copy block of copy from a content (non-theme) spread.

**16. Literary Magazine Poetry:** A single selection of poetry from your literary magazine.

**17. Literary Magazine Prose:** A single selection of prose from your literary magazine.

**18. Graphic Short Story:** A short story of up to 10 pages in graphic novel format. All work should be original. May be digitally created or hand drawn. Submit as a PDF.

# PHOTOGRAPHY

For photo categories, several categories require three images instead of one. All three images should be attached to the same entry. Submit JPG files. All photos within an entry must be taken by the same photographer. Unless noted, captions are not required.

**19. Spot News Photo:** A single image of an event or breaking news. Must be candid/not posed.

**20. Feature Photography:** An entry consists of three candid photos of student life, either on or off campus, all taken by the same photographer.

**21. Sports Action Photography:** An entry consists of three candid action shots taken by the same photographer. Entries should include a range of diversity (i.e. not just all football photos); may include coverage of recreation and non-school-related sporting events.

**22. Sports Reaction Photo:** A single candid reaction shot.

**23. Academics/Organization Photography:** An entry consists of three candid photos of academics/organization coverage, all taken by the same photographer.

**24. Middle School Photography:** An entry consists of three photographs taken by a middle school photographer.

**25. Personality Portrait:** A single image of a person or group of people captured in an informal, formal, studio or environmental setting. Can be posed/planned.

**26. Special Effects Photo:** A photo-based image that has been digitally altered using a program such as Photoshop. Upload two files, both the original image and the finished product.

**27. Nature Photo:** A single photo of a natural setting, either with or without people. This should not be a photo illustration.

**28. Animal/Pet Photo:** A single photo of animals or pets.

**28b. Adviser Animal/Pet Photo:** A single photo of animals or pets, taken by an adviser. One entry per publication. Free entry.

# BROADCAST

All video entries must be published to a service such as YouTube, SchoolTube or Vimeo. Entries are in the form of a web link. Take care to ensure your video is public and viewable by the judge.

**29. Broadcast Show Opening:** Produce max 45-second introduction to your campus news program. Be sure to abide by all copyright laws.

**30. Talent Demo Reel:** Produce a max 2:00 demo reel showcasing your on-camera work. This should begin with a montage of a variety of story types and locations and include sections from several different stories for a more detailed look. You may also include on-set anchor work. The reel must be 1:30-2:00.

**31. News Package:** Write, shoot and edit a 3:00 max news package for your high school news program.

**32. Sports Package:** Write, shoot and edit a 3:00 max sports feature package for your school news program. Highlights set to music are not considered a feature package. Do not submit a profile; enter those in Category 34.

**33. Broadcast Commentary/Review:** Write, shoot and edit a max 1:30 broadcast commentary or Review suitable for your school news program. Include B-Roll.

**34. Broadcast Profile:** Write, shoot and edit a 3:00 max profile package for your school news program. It may be a pre-selected subject or an "everybody has a story-style piece."

**35. Feature Package:** Write, shoot and edit a 3:00 max feature package for your school news program. This should not be a profile, enter those in Category 34.

**36. Short Film:** Create a max 5:00 live-action, fictional movie. \$10 per entry

**37. Short Documentary:** Create a max 10:00 documentary. Limit one entry per staff. \$10 entry.

**38. Middle School Short Film:** Create a max 5:00 live-action, fictional movie. \$10 per entry.

**39. Animated Short:** Create a max 2:00 animated movie.

**40. Public Service Announcement:** Produce a 30- or 60-second public service announcement for your school news show on an issue facing today's teens. The PSA should be exactly 30 or exactly 60 seconds.

**41. Commercial:** Create a 30- or 60-second commercial that promotes a product or service. It should be exactly 30 or exactly 60 seconds.

**42. Middle School Commercial/PSA:** Produce a max 60-second commercial or Public Service Announcement.

**43. Videography Demo Reel:** Produce a demo reel showcasing videography work. The reel must be no more than 2:00 and not less than 1:30. Demonstrate diversity, originality and technical expertise.

## DESIGN

Design entries should include publishable, real content, not filler text. For design entries, submit a PDF. For double-page spreads, please select the "spread" option so the pages are facing. Note newspaper/magazine categories now allow double-page spreads if the pages are related. Yearbooks designed chronologically or blended should submit spreads and modules into the category that best fits the entry. For all entries, judges will evaluate both design and content.

**44. Infographic:** Submit an original infographic that presents information to viewers in a clear, compelling visual format.

**45. Newspaper front page:** Submit the front page of your newspaper. Note: Magazine-style pages should be submitted to Category 46.

**46. Newsmagazine front page:** Submit the front page of your newsmagazine. Magazine-style newspaper covers should also be submitted here.

**47. Newspaper/newsmagazine news page/spread:** Submit a news page or spread (if facing pages are related) from your publication.

**48. Newspaper/newsmagazine sports page:** Submit a sports page or spread (if facing pages are related) from your publication.

**49. Newspaper/newsmagazine opinion page:** Submit an opinion page or spread (if facing pages are related) from your publication.

**50. Newspaper/newsmagazine feature page:** Submit a feature/entertainment page or spread (if facing pages are related) of your publication.

**51. Newspaper/newsmagazine in-depth report:** This category is for related content that exceeds two pages and provides in-depth coverage of a topic. \$10 entry fee.

**52. Yearbook Theme Package:** Create a single PDF document that includes the following: Cover, endsheets, title page, opening, closing and dividers. You may also include three additional pages of examples that showcase the visual and verbal development of your theme. One entry per

publication, \$10 entry fee.

**53. Yearbook Student Life spread:** Submit a double-page yearbook student life spread. Please submit as two facing pages if possible.

**54. Yearbook Sports Spread:** Submit a double-page yearbook sports spread. Please submit as two facing pages if possible.

**55. Yearbook Academics/Organizations Spread:** Submit a double-page yearbook academics or organizations spread. Please submit as two facing pages if possible.

**56. Middle School Yearbook Spread:** Submit one spread from your middle school yearbook. Please submit as two facing pages if possible.

**57. Yearbook Module:** Submit a single module from a yearbook. If uploading the full spread, make sure the headline of the mod is included on the entry form.

**58. Yearbook Senior Ad:** Submit a single student-created senior ad of any size.

**59. Yearbook People Spread:** Submit a single people spread of the yearbook.

**60. Literary Magazine spread:** Submit a double-page literary magazine spread. If uploading the full spread, make sure the headline of the mod is included on the entry form.

## ART

For art categories, submit a PDF or JPG

**61. Computer-drawn illustration:** Submit an original student illustration, made entirely from scratch (no photographic elements; submit as JPG or PDF)

**62. Hand-drawn illustration:** Submit an original hand-drawn illustration. (Scan and save as JPG or PDF)

**63. Editorial Cartoon:** Create a hand- or computer-drawn editorial cartoon suitable for publication in a high school publication (Scan and save as a JPG or PDF)

**\*\*Just in case** you didn't see it earlier, check out the Graphic Short Story listed under Category 18

## MULTIMEDIA

Submit a web link to the entry

**64. Multimedia (web) Event Coverage:** Submit a single URL that leads to a multimedia approach to coverage of a single event. Entries here should be more than just a video -- it should be a package that includes coverage such as video, text, audio,

photography and interactive elements.

**65. Multimedia Feature:** Submit a single URL that leads to a multimedia approach to a feature topic such as an issue or profile. Entries here should be more than just a video -- it should be a package that includes coverage such as video, text, audio, photography and interactive elements.

## Quick Turn Contests

Work must be uploaded by 8 p.m. Eastern on Friday, Feb. 5 (except for Category 83, which is due on Monday, Feb. 8). Entries are \$7 and a publication may submit up to five per category except Cat 85 (1 entry, \$10 fee). All material used in these entries must be generated this week.

**69. Quick Turn Promotional Video:** Create a one-minute "hype video" that could be used to help recruit students for next year's publication/program. All footage must be recorded this week. If any music is used, be sure to follow copyright laws. As with all video entries, post to YouTube, SchoolTube or Vimeo and share a link to the completed video.

**70. Quick Turn News Page:** Create a single page (max size 11x17") that localizes the current state of COVID vaccines in Florida and your community. Upload as a PDF.

**71. Quick Turn Cooking Challenge:** Create a max 3:00 cooking video that puts a creative twist on pretzels. This might be making homemade pretzels or could involve using pretzels to enhance an existing recipe. As with all video entries, post to YouTube, SchoolTube or Vimeo and share a link to the completed video.

**72. Deadline Broadcast Package:** Create a 1:30 broadcast news package that localizes the current state of COVID vaccines in Florida and your community. All footage must be recorded this week. If any music is used, be sure to follow copyright laws. As with all video entries, post to YouTube, SchoolTube or Vimeo and share a link to the completed video.

**73. Middle School Deadline Broadcast Package:** Create a 1:30 broadcast package about how students are using their masks to make fashion statements. All footage must be recorded this week. If any music is used, be sure to follow copyright laws. As with all video entries, post to YouTube, SchoolTube or Vimeo and share a link to the completed video.

**74. Fiction and Illustration:** Craft a short story of about 700 words and a hand- or computer-drawn illustration inspired by the phrase "Game On." Submit as a single PDF.

**75. Yearbook Mod Design:** Design a yearbook module that is 3 inches wide and 7 inches tall about how students are using masks to make fashion statements. Submit as a PDF.

**76. Quick Turn Short Film:** Create a 4:00-5:00 short film about a protagonist facing an important decision. As with all video entries, post to YouTube, SchoolTube or Vimeo and share a link to the completed video.

**66. Original Music Mix:** Submit a 1:30 original music composition suitable for production use.

**67. Motion Graphics:** Submit a 1:00 reel of original motion graphics.

**68. Podcast:** Submit a max 10:00 podcast about a topic of interest to your community. \$10 per entry.

**77. Photography Challenge:** Submit a single portrait of a living subject (person or pet) that showcases creative use of either natural or artificial light. Submit as a JPG.

**78. Middle School Photography Challenge:** Submit a single portrait of a living subject (person or pet) that showcases creative use of either natural or artificial light. Submit as a JPG

**79. Breaking Multimedia Coverage:** Submit a single weblink to multimedia coverage that provides your readers a behind-the-scenes look at how your publication/program has adapted to changes this year. Entries here should be more than just a video -- it should be a package that includes coverage such as video, text, audio, photography and interactive elements.

**80. Quick Turn Podcast:** Create a max 10:00 podcast that provides a fan-friendly preview of Super Bowl Sunday. Submit a weblink to the show.

**81. Leadership Challenge:** [CLICK HERE](#) to download the specific instructions for this competition.

**82. Quick Turn Lit Mag Spread:** Create a literary magazine featuring original content and inspired by this phrase: "You've Got Mail." Submit the spread as a PDF.

**83. Quick Turn Written Review:** NOTE: This category only is due by Monday, Feb. 8. Write a 300-word review of the Super Bowl LV halftime show. Submit as a PDF.

**84. Quick Turn Broadcast Review:** Produce a review package called "Gimme 5," showcasing 5 awesome things in pop culture this week. Max time 1:30. As with all video entries, post to YouTube, SchoolTube or Vimeo and share a link to the completed video.

**85. Cinema Editing Challenge:** [CLICK HERE](#) to download footage to turn into a 2:45-3:00 short film, either based on the provided script or your own interpretation. As with all video entries, post to YouTube, SchoolTube or Vimeo and share a link to the completed video. One entry will be accepted per publication. \$10 entry fee. This contest is sponsored by [EditStock](#) and its new hands-on editing training software, [EditMentor.com](#).

# Journalist of the Year Awards

FSPA invites outstanding seniors to apply for the Todd C. Smith Florida Student Journalist of the Year competition (next page) and six other Journalist of the Year awards. All are free to enter and carry cash prizes. Additionally, our Emerging Young Journalist award recognizes an outstanding freshman or sophomore student journalist. Entries are free; publications must be members of FSPA.

For Categories 86-91, publications may enter only one senior per category, and a student may enter only one of the six. To be clear, a student MAY enter one of these categories and still submit a portfolio to the overall Student Journalist of the Year competition (Category 93).

**DUE FEB 21 > 86. Tom Pierce Photojournalist of the Year:** Entrants will submit up to 10 images of their best work that reflect their abilities as a photojournalist. Include captions and a brief reflection for each image. The entries should be designed into a single PDF portfolio or website.

**DUE FEB 21 > 87. Designer of the Year:** Submit a portfolio of up to 10 examples that reflect your range of design abilities. Include brief written reflections for each entry. Combine into a single PDF attachment or website.

**DUE FEB 21 > 88. Broadcast Journalist of the Year:** Submit the URL to a single demo reel (max length: 10:00) demonstrating your abilities as a broadcast journalist.

**DUE FEB 21 > 89. Writer of the Year:** Submit a portfolio of up to seven writing samples demonstrating your abilities as a reporter and writer. Include brief written reflections about each entry. Combine into a single PDF attachment or website.

**DUE FEB 21 > 90. Multimedia/Web Journalist of the Year:** Submit the URL to a single page showcasing your abilities as a multimedia/web journalist. Include brief written reflections for each sample.

**DUE FEB 21 > 91. Artist of the Year:** Entrants will submit up to 10 samples of work that best reflects their abilities as an artist. Include brief reflections for each image. The entries should be designed into a single PDF portfolio or website.

**DUE FEB 21 > 92. Emerging Young Journalist:** This award, sponsored by the Tampa Bay Times Fund, recognizes the top freshman or sophomore student journalist. The contest is open to Florida students in grades 9 and 10 whose publications belong to FSPA. The winner will receive \$100 along with free registration to FSPA conventions for the remainder of their high school career.

Entrants will need to submit the following items for consideration. Each publication may nominate one student from this award. All items will need to be combined into a single weblink or attachment.

- A portfolio of up to five published works
- A recommendation letter from the student's adviser
- A recommendation letter from a student leader on the publication
- A 500-word essay by the applicant outlining his/her interest in journalism/media
- A resume

Entries will be reviewed by a panel of professional journalists and out-of-state educators. Multiple rounds of judging may be utilized.

# Todd C. Smith Florida Student Journalist of the Year

**DUE FEB. 7 > 93. Todd C. Smith Student Florida Journalist of the Year:** FSPA's top student award.

The contest is open to Florida students whose publications belong to FSPA. The first-place winner will receive \$1,000. Runner-up will receive \$600. The third-place winner will receive \$400. The Florida winner will advance to the Journalism Education Association's Journalist of the Year competition. The winning student's adviser must be a member of JEA to compete at the national level.

Entrants, using their publication's account on the platform, will need to submit the following items for consideration. Entrants should consolidate the following items into a single PDF document:

- A weblink to a portfolio based on the criteria that can be found on the JEA website ([Full link here](#))
- A personal narrative about their scholastic journalism experience (see the published rubric for more info about essay expectations)
- A resume
- 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
- A 30-second video of the entrant discussing why journalism is important and/or how it shaped the applicant (post to Dropbox, OneDrive or a similar site provide a link within your application)

Feb. 7 at 11:59 p.m. is a firm deadline for this contest. No entries will be accepted after that time. The winners will be announced by March 1 so the first-place winner can make revisions prior to the JEA contest deadline.

**The entire application must adhere completely to copyright laws and guidelines.**

The Journalism Education Association's website provides a wealth of information about the Journalist of the Year 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 at JEA.org, work samples in the portfolio should be categorized using these 11 areas:

- Reporting and Writing
- Editing, Leadership and Team Building
- Web and Social Media
- Design
- Broadcast Journalism
- Photojournalism
- Law, Ethics and News Literacy
- Marketing and Audience Engagement
- Commitment to Diversity

We urge you to study the JEA rubric carefully and utilize provided resources such as the guidelines video and the growing collection of Q&A videos on the website. Direct questions about the Florida Student Journalist of the Year Award to JEA Florida Director Renée Burke at [rdnburke@gmail.com](mailto:rdnburke@gmail.com) or FSPA Evaluations Coordinator Joe Humphrey at [fspacontests@gmail.com](mailto:fspacontests@gmail.com).

# How to access the submission database:

1. Go to <http://betternewspapercontest.com>
2. In the top menu, select "Contestant Login"
3. Select the "Contestant Manager" tab and "FSPA Spring 2021 Digital Contests" on the left menu (It's near the bottom).
4. Then, on the right menu, select your publication. They are listed by school, publication. If your organization is not listed, skip down on this page to the "HELP! I can't access the database" section.
5. The password is the same you used last fall. If you did not enter last fall or cannot remember your password, see the "HELP! I can't access the database" section below on this page.
6. You may be asked to update your contact information, change your password or more. You may also be asked to read and agree to the terms of use. Hit submit once you have done all of that.
7. For first-time users, after uploading a few entries, you may receive an email asking you to confirm your email address. You will be unable to upload additional entries until you've completed this important security step. We strongly suggest you make an effort to clear this hurdle ASAP because there will be no extensions granted for entries and sometimes that email can get caught by a spam filter. School email addresses are especially prone to getting these emails stuck and sometimes advisers need to resort to a GMail address that will let that email through.

## **HELP! I can't access the database...**

• If you are unable to log-in, send an email with the subject line DATABASE to [fspacontests@gmail.com](mailto:fspacontests@gmail.com). Make sure your name, your publication name, school and your email address are included in the message, along with an explanation. Again, provide us with specific information here so we can help you! You WILL receive a response within 24 hours, and most likely significantly faster. DO NOT use the help feature on the website, which goes to our vendor.

## **Navigating the entry form**

1. Once you've logged in successfully, go to "My Contest" in the top menu and select "submit entry"
  2. Select GENERAL for "Division"
  3. Then select the category you want to enter.
  4. Under headline or title, provide a headline or description for each entry.
- Follow the instructions for submitting specific types of files. DO NOT submit Word docs; DO NOT attempt to attach audio or video files.

**Who should be credited:** Enter the names of up to four students. If more than four students contributed to an entry, enter "Staff" for the entry name. Entries also require you to respond to a RECAPTCHA. Please do not type student names in all lowercase or all caps.

## **THIS IS IMPORTANT!!! Managing Entries**

Once you've uploaded content, you can view and edit your entries at any time by going to the top left menu "my contest" and selecting "manage entries."

This screen will allow you to see all of your entries at a glance. You're able to click on any file you uploaded to review it or any link you provided to test it. On the right side of each submission, select "edit" to change an entry; "disable" if you wish to keep an entry in the database but not submit it and "delete" to eliminate an entry from the database.

NOTE: Once we have confirmed your entry, you can only DISABLE it. So if you submit something and decide you no longer wish to enter it, you would need to click DISABLE. If you delete or disable a category entry, that category will reappear in the pulldown menu on the page where you submit entries. Please make sure you test the attachments and links to ensure the content is viewable by judges.

## **Billing**

You can keep track of your entry fees in the system. After the contest window closes, you will be invoiced on your account on the FSPA website.