



Connecticut Press Club 2024 Communications Contest Winners

Writing

News Story (Online Publication)

- **First Place:** Marc Fitch, *Connecticut Inside Investigator* – “Drive Time: Former Lamont Chief of Staff Racked Up Personal Miles on State Cars”
- **Second Place:** Emilia Otte, *The Connecticut Examiner* – “Math Gap Between Rich and Poor in Connecticut Widens Despite Infusion of Federal Dollars”
- **Third Place:** Sophia Muce, *The Connecticut Examiner* – “Burnout and Budget Shortfalls Plague Fairfield’s Regional Dispatch Center”
- **Honorable Mention:** Katherine Revello, *Connecticut Inside Investigator* – “Anthem changes course on anesthesia policy”

Continuing Coverage or Unfolding News

- **First Place:** Katherine Revello, *Connecticut Inside Investigator* – “Obscure Law Used to Demand Ballot Fraud Arrests in Bridgeport”
- **Honorable Mention:** Chris Levandowski, *The Granby Drummer* – “Six Months and Counting for 37 Hartford Avenue”
- **Honorable Mention:** Faith Tyldsley, *The Granby Drummer* – “The Goats of Granby”

In-depth Reporting

- **First Place:** Emilia Otte, *The Connecticut Examiner* – “Barriers to State Disability Services Leave Parents of Disabled Young People Scrambling”
- **Honorable Mention:** Georgette Yacoub, *New Canaan Darien + Rowayton Magazine* – “The Promise and Politics of Psychedelics”
- **Honorable Mention:** Elizabeth Barron, *New Canaan Darien + Rowayton Magazine* – “Weighing in on Weight Loss”

Editorial/Op-ed

- **First Place:** Gregory Stroud, *The Connecticut Examiner* – “Let Water Go Where it Wants to Go”



- **Second Place:** Reinhard Maier, *The Granby Drummer* – “Opinion: Key Capture Energy Project is Not in Granby's Best Interests”
- **Third Place:** Chandra Bozelko, *The National Memo* – “How Private Prison Health Care Rips Off Government (And Why Medicaid Works Better)”

Feature Story - Print-based newspaper

- **Honorable Mention:** Beth Levine, *The Rye Record* – “After the Blast: Veteran Journalist Bob Woodruff and Son Chronicle the Moment that Changed Everything”
- **Honorable Mention:** Nicole Muller, *The Granby Drummer* – “Puzzle Slam DUNK!”

Feature Story - Magazine, newsletter/other publication

- **First Place:** Beth Cooney Fitzpatrick, *Stamford Magazine* – “With Full Hearts”
- **Second Place:** Georgette Yacoub, *New Canaan Darien + Rowayton Magazine* – “Trials and Triumphs”
- **Third place:** Eileen Bartels, *Greenwich Magazine* – “A Season To Remember”

Feature Story - Online publication

- **First Place:** Marc Fitch, *Connecticut Inside Investigator* – “Unplugged: The \$7 Billion Tax in Your Electric Bill”
- **Second Place:** Angela Carella, *The Connecticut Examiner* – “Stamford Man, and His Cat, Navigate Homelessness in City Woods”
- **Third Place:** Marc Fitch, *Connecticut Inside Investigator* – “Racial Equity Commission Helps Kill Association Health Plans”
- **Honorable Mention:** Toni Tucker and Kathryn Boughton, *BerkshireStyle* – “A Moveable Feast”
- **Honorable Mention:** Lizbeth Ryan, *Hartford International University for Religion and Peace* – “International Student Finds Grandmotherly Bond in Hartford”

Personality Profile - 750 words or fewer

- **First Place:** C.J. Gibson, *The Granby Drummer* – “Thankful for the Word ‘But’”

Personality Profile - More than 750 words

- **First Place:** Jill Johnson Mann, *Greenwich Magazine* – “Vision”
- **Second Place:** Jill Johnson Mann, *Greenwich Magazine* – “Heart & Hustle”



- **Third Place:** Riann Smith, *Greenwich Magazine* – “Maggie Siff Dives Deep”
- **Honorable Mention:** Kate Perry, *068 Magazine* – “Jimmy Grashow’s Legacy”

Specialty Articles - Business

- **First Place:** Katherine Revello, *Connecticut Inside Investigator* – “Ratioed: How CT Licensing Laws Contribute to the Construction Worker Shortage”
- **Honorable Mention:** Julie Jason, *Forbes* – “Final RMD Regulations Released Today; 10-Year Rule Clarified”

Specialty Articles - Education

- **First Place:** Brandon Whiting, *Connecticut Inside Investigator* – “Con Academy: Private School Allegedly Defrauding Chinese Immigrants”

Specialty Articles - Food

- **First Place:** Elizabeth Keyser, *Stamford Magazine* – “Season’s Eatings”
- **Second Place:** Elizabeth Keyser, *New Canaan Darien + Rowayton Magazine* – “Eat Column”
- **Third Place:** Mary Kate Hogan, *Greenwich Magazine* – “Fresh on the Scene”
- **Honorable Mention:** Elizabeth Keyser, *New Canaan Darien + Rowayton Magazine* – “Chef Luke Venner Elevates the Pub at the New Canaan Playhouse”
- **Honorable Mention:** Aline Weiller, *O68 Magazine* – “Kitchen Essentials”

Specialty Articles - Government or politics

- **Honorable Mention:** Marc Fitch, *Connecticut Inside Investigator* – “Hidden Hand: State Contracting board clashes with executive director”

Specialty Articles - Green/environmental

- **First Place:** Thomas Renner, *Commercial Construction & Renovation* – “Sustainability Takes Flight”
- **Second Place:** Shirley Murtha, *The Granby Drummer* – “How the Loss of Insect Populations Affect Bird Life”
- **Third Place:** Karen Young, *The Granby Drummer* – “It Takes a Village to Make a Garden Grow!”



- **Honorable Mention:** Marc Fitch, *Connecticut Inside Investigator* – “Connecticut Green Bank Awards No-bid Contracts to Nonprofit it Created”

Specialty Articles - History

- **First Place:** Andrew Fowler, *Yankee Institute* – “George Washington Slept Here: The First President’s Historic Tour through Connecticut”
- **Second Place:** Andrew Fowler, *Yankee Institute* – “Was Connecticut First in Flight?”
- **Third Place:** Todd Vibert, *The Granby Drummer* – “The Weed-Enders House Move, 50 Years Ago”

Specialty Articles - Hobby

- **Third Place:** Thomas Renner, *PHC Pros* – “Music City Makeover”
- **Honorable Mention:** Thomas Renner, *PHC Pros* – “The Big Picture”

Specialty Articles - Personal Essay

- **First Place:** Amy Polacko, *Huffington Post* – “I Barely Escaped My Abusive Marriage. If JD Vance Had His Way, Id Still Be Trapped There.”
- **Honorable Mention:** Gabi Coatsworth, *Storied Stuff* – “The Scent of History”

Specialty Articles - Health

- **First Place:** Marc Fitch, *Connecticut Inside Investigator* – “Best Interest of the Child: One Mother’s Fight Against a Claim of Parental Alienation”
- **Second Place:** Cheryl Weinstock, *KFF Health News* – “Decades of National Suicide Prevention Policies Haven’t Slowed the Deaths”
- **Third Place:** Cheryl Weinstock, *KFF Health News* – “Federal Panel Prescribes New Mental Health Strategy to Curb Maternal Deaths”
- **Honorable Mention:** Tom Connor, *Moffly Media* – “Lean on Me”

Specialty Articles - Religion

- **First Place:** Allia Zobel Nolan – “The Hound, the Husband, and the Good Shepherd”
- **Second Place:** Andrew Fowler, *Yankee Institute* – “Does Loss of Religion Impact Civic Engagement and Taxes?”
- **Honorable Mention:** Andrew Fowler, *Yankee Institute* – “Saint Babe Ruth?”



Specialty Articles - Reviews

- **First Place:** Elizabeth Keyser, *New Canaan Darien + Rowayton Magazine* – “Hometown Haunt: Charlie’s Tavern Opens in Darien”
- **Second Place:** Chandra Bozelko, *The Outlaw* – “‘Wicked’ Never Should Have Been A Musical”

Specialty Articles - Social Issues

- **First Place:** Chandra Bozelko, *The Outlaw* – “Whether It’s Ozempic or Abortion, We’re Having the Same Debate”
- **Second Place:** Amy Polacko, *Ms. Magazine* – “It’s Been a Year Since Catherine Kassenoff’s Assisted Suicide. Has Anything Changed in Family Court?”
- **Third Place:** Brandon Whiting, *Connecticut Inside Investigator* – “Should this Dog Die? A Legal Battle After Mauling Death in Suffield”

Specialty Articles - Sports

- **First Place:** Thomas Renner, *Stamford Magazine* – “Meet Stamford’s Generational Sports Talent”
- **Second Place:** Kim Pereira, *The Granby Drummer* – “GMHS Volleyball Player Jayne Hiatt Achieved 1,000 Kills”

Specialty Articles - Style

- **Second Place:** Chandra Bozelko, *The Outlaw* – “Vice Presidential Mani-Pedis: A Missed Opportunity”

Specialty Articles - Travel

- **First Place:** Anastasia Healy, *Fairfield County Look* – “Amazing Iceland”

Columns - General

- **First Place:** Mark Florentino, *The Granby Drummer* – “If You Love Me Like You Love Me”
- **Honorable Mention:** Chandra Bozelko, *The National Memo* – “For Prisoners, Medicaid Waivers Permit Off Site Care And Better Outcomes”



Columns - Informational (how-to, Q&A, advice)

- **First Place:** Monique Fitzpatrick, *The Granby Drummer* – “The Scoop on Feline Enrichment”
- **Second Place:** Elizabeth Busbee, *The Connecticut Examiner* – “Stepping Off the Relationship Escalator”
- **Third Place:** Julie Jason, *Hearst CT Insider* – “It’s Time to Check Mutual Fund Capital Gains Distributions”
- **Honorable Mention:** Julie Jason, *Hearst CT Insider* – “How Analysts Can Affect Stock Prices? Connecticut Columnist Julie Jason has Answers”
- **Honorable Mention:** David Desiderato, *The Granby Drummer* – “Buying Soil or Plants? Read this first!”

Columns - Personal Opinion (bylined, not editorial)

- **First Place:** Deborah DiSesa Hirsch, *Stamford Advocate* – “My Son’s an Adult. Isn’t it Lovely?”

Headlines

- **First Place:** Melinda Anderson, *Stamford Magazine* – “Hair of the (Downward) Dog”
- **Second Place:** Melinda Anderson, *Stamford Magazine* – “Presidential Palace”
- **Third Place:** Conner Drigotas, *Connecticut Inside Investigator* – “Inside Investigator: Four Headlines”
- **Honorable Mention:** Melinda Anderson, *Stamford Magazine* – “Moveable Feasts”

Publications Regularly Written by Entrant - Newspaper/Magazine/Magapaper (newspaper format with magazine-style writing and design)

- **First Place:** Chandra Bozelko, *The Outlaw* – “A Felon in the White House? Democrats Should Have Seen That Coming”

Publications Regularly Written by Entrant - Newsletter/other publication, nonprofit, government or educational

- **First Place:** Laurie Stone, *Laurie Stone Writes: Musings, Rants & Scribbles* – “Surviving Our Mixed Marriage”
- **Second Place:** Laurie Stone, *Laurie Stone Writes: Musings, Rants & Scribbles* – “4 Unexpected Perks to Getting Older”



Fiction for Adult Readers (Novels)

- **First Place:** Mary Sharnick – *En Plein Air*
- **Second Place:** Libby Waterford – *Take Me Over*
- **Third Place:** Andrea Ezerins – *Again and Back To You*
- **Honorable Mention:** Sharon Duckett – *The Shutdown List*
- **Honorable Mention:** Libby Waterford and Elle Waters – *Autumn Crush*

Fiction for Adult Readers (Novellas)

- **Honorable Mention:** Andrew Fowler – *The Condemned*

Nonfiction Book for Adult Readers (Autobiography or Memoir)

- **First Place:** Richard Seltzer – *One Family*

Nonfiction Book for Adult Readers (Biography or History)

- **First Place:** Gwen Reiss – *New Canaan Modern: A Preservation History*

Nonfiction Book for Adult Readers (Humor)

- **First Place:** Laurie Newkirk – *The BEST Christmas Pun & Dad Joke Book*

Nonfiction Book for Adult Readers (General Nonfiction)

- **First Place:** Amy Polacko and Dr. Christine Cocchiola – *FRAMED: Women in the Family Court Underworld*
- **Second Place:** Anastasia Healy – *100 Things to Do in Connecticut Before You Die*

Nonfiction Book for Adult Readers (Creative Nonfiction)

- **First Place:** Aline Weiller – *FUN: Essays on a Life Embraced*
- **Honorable Mention:** Amy Lionetti-Scorziello – *Love, Mommy (an unintended book)*

Children's Book (Fiction)

- **First Place:** Meira Rosenburg – *28 Days of Neon*
- **Second Place:** Allia Zobel Nolan – *Why Can't My Brother Be More Like My Cat?*

Short Story

- **First Place:** Laurel Schwartz, *Glassworks* – "Anomaly"



- **Third Place:** Andrew Fowler, *Yankee Institute* – “St. Beatus and the Dragon”

Short Story Collection

- **First Place:** Ira Joe Fisher, *HamletHub* – *P-06877-etry*

Creative Verse (Single Poem)

- **Second Place:** Adair Heitmann, *Oreanaug Mountain Publishing* – “Land of My Home”
- **Honorable Mention:** Robin DuCharme Pastore, *WGCH* – “Tiger Dads”
- **Honorable Mention:** Marlou Newkirk, *Motherrr.com* – “Forgiveness – Fire & Ice”

Essay, Chapter, or Section in a Book

- **First Place:** Chandra Bozelko and Erin Corbett, *Bloomsbury* – “Dead By The Laws Of Men Yet Speaketh: The Intersection Between Prison Writing and Education”

Collegiate/Education

Public Relations, Social Media, or Recruitment/Involvement Campaign

- **First Place:** Steven Havira, *Hartford International University* – “Ambassador Andrew Young Presents The Howard Thurman Center”

Art and Design - Design (print or electronic)

- **Third Place:** Steven Havira, *Hartford International University* – 1834 Magazine

Editing for a Print or Online Publication

Single Page, Section, or Supplement Edited by Entrant (Magazine/Newspaper)

- **First Place:** Cristin Marandino and Melinda Anderson, *Stamford Magazine* – “The Heart of Gold”
- **Second Place:** Cristin Marandino and Samantha Yanks, *Westport, Weston and Wilton Magazine* – “The Power of Pitaro”
- **Third Place:** Samantha Yanks, *Westport, Weston and Wilton Magazine* – “Music + Mission”



- **Honorable Mention:** Samantha Yanks, *Westport, Weston and Wilton Magazine* – “Fit For The Future: Westport Power Duo Marysol Castro and Dr. Joshua Lander Share Their Commitment to Fitness”

Publication Regularly Edited by Entrant (Magazine/Newspaper)

- **First Place:** Melinda Anderson, *Stamford Magazine* – September/October 2024 Issue
- **Second Place:** Eileen Murphy, *New Canaan Darien + Rowayton Magazine* – September/October 2024 Issue
- **Third Place:** Cristin Marandino, *Greenwich Magazine* – October 2024 Issue
- **Honorable Mention:** Samantha Yanks, *Westport, Weston and Wilton Magazine* – September/October 2024 Issue

Publication Regularly Edited by Entrant (Newsletter/Other Publication - nonprofit, government, or educational)

- **First Place:** Conner Drigotas, *Connecticut Inside Investigator* – “Inside Investigator: investigative journalism to root out corruption in Connecticut”

Publication Regularly Edited by Entrant (Newsletter/Other Publication - corporate or for profit)

- **Second Place:** Tom Quinn, *tomvquinn.com* – “How Will You Write the Story of Your Life?”
- **Third Place:** Tom Quinn, *tomvquinn.com* – “Bubbles Up”
- **Honorable Mention:** Tom Quinn, *tomvquinn.com* – “Respect Never Goes Out of Style”

Photography

Single Photograph (News or feature photo)

- **Second Place:** Garvin Burke, *Stamford Magazine* – “Season’s Eatings Photo”
- **Third Place:** Andrea Carson and Venera Alexandrova, *Greenwich Magazine* – “Fresh on the Scene / Mi Casa Es Su Casa / Juju Cantina”
- **Honorable Mention:** Katherine Calderwood, *Greenwich Magazine* – “Core Principles”
- **Honorable Mention:** Andrea Carson, *Stamford Magazine* – The Real Estate Issue Cover



Single Photograph (Sports Photo)

- **First Place:** Katherine Calderwood, *New Canaan Darien Rowayton + Magazine* – “Trials and Triumphs”

Photo Essay

- **First Place:** Venera Alexandrova and Katherine Calderwood, *Greenwich Magazine* – “At Her Core”
- **Second Place:** Venera Alexandrova and Lacy Kiernan Carroll, *New Canaan Darien + Rowayton Magazine* – “Destination Rowayton”
- **Third Place:** Venera Alexandrova and Hulya Kolabas, *New Canaan Darien + Rowayton Magazine* – “Southern Charmer”
- **Honorable Mention:** Katherine Calderwood, *New Canaan Darien + Rowayton Magazine* – “Trials and Triumphs”

Graphics and Design

Graphics

- **Honorable Mention:** Joseph Camardo, *Connecticut Inside Investigator* – “Best Interest of the Child”

Page Design (Magazine or Magapaper)

- **First Place:** Venera Alexandrova, *Greenwich Magazine* – “100 Years Greenwich Association of Realtors”
- **Second Place:** Garvin Burke, *Stamford Magazine* – 2024 Olympic Section
- **Third Place:** Venera Alexandrova and Katherine Calderwood, *New Canaan Darien + Rowayton Magazine* – “The Anna Kaiser Effect”
- **Honorable Mention:** Venera Alexandrova and Katherine Calderwood, *New Canaan Darien + Rowayton Magazine* – “Trials and Triumphs”
- **Honorable Mention:** Venera Alexandrova, *New Canaan Darien + Rowayton Magazine* – “Get Organized”

Book Designed by Entrant

- **Honorable Mention:** Vincent Legg – *The BEST Christmas Pun & Dad Joke Book*



Radio and Television

Prepared Report (Radio)

- **First Place:** Robin DuCharme Pastore, *WGCH* – “Wreaths Across America: Honoring Veterans in 4,200 U.S. Communities: Including Ours!”
- **Honorable Mention:** Robin DuCharme Pastore, *WGCH* – “Volcanoes Need At Least 4 Vents: Why Managing Our Reactions & Behaviors Matters”

Special Programming (Radio)

- **First Place:** Robin DuCharme Pastore, *WGCH* – “WW2 Transport Carrier Rhona, Classified: 1015 U.S. Soldiers Die: a Mandated Sworn Secret: 11/26/43 til 1996”

Special Programming (Television)

- **First Place:** Nicholas Doscher, *NBC Connecticut* – “Hidden in Plain Sight: Weir Farm and Meriden Traffic Light”

Interview (Radio)

- **First Place:** Robin DuCharme Pastore, *WGCH* – “What Is a Meaningful Life? Interview with Sharon Kallenda”
- **Second Place:** Robin DuCharme Pastore, *WGCH* – “Interview with Award-winning Researcher & Neurospine Surgeon Dr. Arthur L. Jenkins, MD”
- **Honorable Mention:** Robin DuCharme Pastore, *WGCH* – “Crusader for Women's Education: Catherine Beecher, Dedicated to Education For Women and Girls”

Web and Social Media

Website Edited or Managed by Entrant (nonprofit, government or educational)

- **First Place:** Conner Drigotas, *Connecticut Inside Investigator* – “Inside Investigator”
- **Honorable Mention:** Aline Weiller, *Wordsmith LLC* – “ALB Tutoring”

Personal Website

- **Second Place:** Adair Heitmann and Kiana Stockwell – Adair Wilson Heitmann, BFA website



Podcast

- **First Place:** Denise DiGrigoli, *Drive Media Consulting* – MAV's Coffee Clarity with Denise
- **Second Place:** Conner Drigotas and Joseph Camardo, *Connecticut Inside Investigator* – Inside Update

Blog (nonprofit, government or educational)

- **Honorable Mention:** Gabi Coatsworth, *GabiCoatsworth.com* – Writers' Rendezvous November update - Part 2

Blog (personal)

- **First Place:** Chandra Bozelko, *The Outlaw* – “Accountability for the Nonprofit Terrorist Industrial Complex”
- **Second Place:** Lisa Bernard, *LisaBernard.WordPress.com*– “It's December & How Fondly I Remember the First Little Bear with Whom I Shared a Winter”
- **Third Place:** Lisa Bernard, *lisabernard.com* – “The Interlude: A New Year & Welcome for Winter’s Gift of Negative Space”
- **Honorable Mention:** Tom Quinn, *tomvquinn.com* – “Forging a Path Through the Chaos”

Electronic Newsletter (Personal)

- **Honorable Mention:** Tom Quinn – “When Four Eyes Are Better Than Two”

Video for Web (Special interest video)

- **Honorable Mention:** Mitzy Sky, *True Sky Creatives*– “Just Doing the Little Things Episode 4: Begin Again”

Public Relations Materials

Report

- **First Place:** Linda Avellar and Barbara Aronica – Ferguson Library Annual Report



Information for the Media

News or Feature Release (Single Release)

- **First Place:** Thomas Renner and Sabrina Boccuzzi, *Mercury Marketing Communications* – “Bendheim Channel Glass Brings New Life to the Domino Sugar Refinery Building”
- **Second Place:** Sabrina Boccuzzi, *Mercury Marketing Communications* – “Bendheim Glass Sparkles in Met Opera Renovation”

Media Pitch

- **First Place:** Thomas Renner, *Mercury Marketing Communications* – “Kansas City International Airport pitch”

Speeches

Speech

- **First Place:** Adair Heitmann – “This Little Light of Mine”
- **Third Place:** Adair Heitmann – “Beginning Again”



2024 Connecticut Press Club High School Contest Winners

Broadcast or Video

Video Feature Story

- **First Place:** Olesia Tataryn, *Stamford High School* – “Ukrainian Festival Held in Stamford”
- **Third Place:** Elizabeth Jacinto, *Stamford High School* – “Stamford High School - Through the Years”

Radio or Podcast Prepared Report

- **Second Place:** Sabrina Tomei, *Fairfield Ludlowe High School* – “Town Hall Conversations Episode 1: The State Legislature, Policy Making, and Youth with Rep. Jenn Leeper”

Radio/Television Interview or Talk Show

- **First Place:** Julia Knispel, *The Fight 4 Human Rights* – Episode 22 with Dr. Timothy Patrick McCarthy
- **Second Place:** Julia Knispel, *The Fight 4 Human Rights* – Episode 20 with Dr. Phoebe Godfrey

News

Visual (Single-Page Layout)

- **First Place:** Julia Masso, *Fairfield Ludlowe High School* – “The Rise in Male Mental Health”

Writing

Opinion

- **First Place:** Sabrina Tomei, *Fairfield Ludlowe High School* – “Weighted Dice: The GPA Calculation System”



- **Second Place:** Sabrina Tomei, *Fairfield Ludlowe High School* – “Jubilee: A Bipartisan Mirage”
- **Third Place:** Lola Duhov, *Stamford High School* – “A (Harmonious) Call to Action: Why All Schools Should Tune into Music Education”
- **Honorable Mention:** Sabrina Tomei, *Fairfield Ludlowe High School* – “Teaching to the Test: The AP Struggle”
- **Honorable Mention:** Princesse Stessy Hyppolite, *Stamford High School* – “Respect Goes Both Ways”

Opinion

- **First Place:** Isabella Giammarino, *South Windsor High School* – “The Greatest Gift She was Ever Given – A Story of Resilience and Bravery”
- **Second Place:** Ean Frankel, *Staples High School* – “Working: A Trash Hauler's Take”
- **Third Place:** Ashen Harper, *Stamford High School* – “Student Climate Activism: How Students Across the Country are Taking on a Global Crisis”
- **Honorable Mention:** Eli Schwartzman, *South Windsor High School* – “The Payoff Pitch”

Editorial

- **First Place:** Ashen Harper, *Stamford High School* – “No Free Ride! How the District’s Bus Policy Unintentionally Discriminates Against Those Who Need it Most”
- **Second Place:** Aleksander Nowak, *Stamford High School* – “Prioritizing Safety Over Policy: The Case for Delaying Openings Due To Extreme Cold”