

Annual

New England Newspaper Awards



September 26, 2025
Northampton Hotel



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Terrence Williams, former president and coo, Keene Sentinel
Cecily Weisburgh, co-executive editor, The Keene Sentinel

Linda Conway, executive director, New England Newspaper & Press Association

2025 New England Newspaper Awards Luncheon



Each year, the New England Newspaper & Press Association identifies our region's best news publications and recognizes them with the prestigious "New England Newspaper of the Year" award. This is a one-of-a-kind competition – it is the only distinction of its kind in the newspaper industry that is judged by audience members.

2025 New England Newspapers of the Year

Specialty Publications



The North Star Monthly
Danville, VT



The New Boston Beacon
New Boston, NH



Providence Business News
Providence, RI



Distinguished Newspaper

Distinguished Newspaper



2025 New England Newspapers of the Year

Weekly Newspapers *Small circulation*



Martha's Vineyard Times
Vineyard Haven, MA



Vermont Standard
Woodstock, VT



Provincetown Independent
Provincetown, MA



Distinguished Newspaper

Distinguished Newspaper

Weekly Newspapers *Large circulation*



The Ellsworth American.
Ellsworth, ME



The Bay State Banner
Roxbury, MA



The Inquirer and Mirror
Nantucket, MA



Seven Days
Burlington, VT



Distinguished Newspaper

Distinguished Newspaper

Distinguished Newspaper

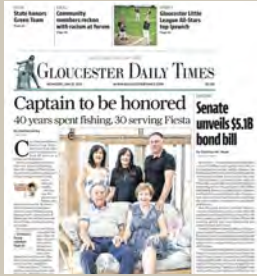


2025 New England Newspapers of the Year

Weekday Newspapers *Small circulation*



The Keene Sentinel
Keene, NH



Gloucester Daily Times
Gloucester, MA



Telegram & Gazette
Worcester, MA



Distinguished Newspaper

Distinguished Newspaper

Weekday Newspapers *Large circulation*



The Berkshire Eagle
Pittsfield, MA



The Republican
Springfield, MA



The Day
New London, CT



Distinguished Newspaper

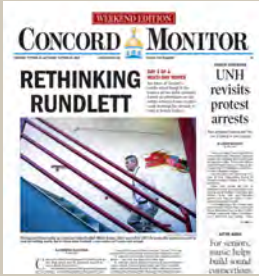
Distinguished Newspaper



2025 New England Newspapers of the Year

Sunday Newspapers

Small circulation



Sunday Monitor
Concord, NH



The Eagle-Tribune
North Andover, MA



The Day
New London, CT



Distinguished Newspaper

Distinguished Newspaper

Sunday Newspapers

Large circulation



Maine Sunday Telegram
Portland, ME



The Berkshire Eagle
Pittsfield, MA



Sunday Republican.
Springfield, MA



Distinguished Newspaper

Distinguished Newspaper

Public Occurrences Awards

In recognition of New England's most outstanding journalism in 2025

The award was established in 1990 to recognize individual and team merit at New England newspapers to mark the 300th anniversary of the founding of Public Occurrences, the first newspaper published in America. Four days after it appeared in Boston in 1690, Public Occurrences was suppressed by the royal governor.

The Concord Bridge, Concord, MA....."Milestone 250"

This massive undertaking by a young, local digital-and-print publication features exhaustive reporting and an excellent array and presentation of stories and art. The series is well-written and well-edited. The story choices are exceptional, and the mix of stories and photos is attention-grabbing, ranging from how well prepared officials were (or weren't) for the celebration to a look at Revolution-themed playing cards. This read is enjoyable, entertaining and educational.

Seven Days, Burlington, VT....."Axed Out"

Most people might not think a lot about the importance of maintaining – and culling – trees to keep forests healthy, but Seven Days recognized how important the vast woodlands of Vermont are to the residents. Well researched and written.

The Republican, Springfield, MA....."Hard Times"

Great work by one writer who brought his in depth insights from being a teacher into both his interviewing and writing processes. A package of important stories about the challenges for young people growing up in Springfield.

The Providence Journal, Providence, RI....."Tracking Citations for Snow Scofflaws"

What could have been a narrow, ho-hum story (writing tickets for not shoveling your walk? Really?) turned into a statewide public service project that detailed the importance of clearing sidewalks and the contrast between how various Rhode Island cities do – or do not – enforce the ordinances on their books. A good and interesting read.

Seven Days, Burlington, VT....."Urgent Scare"

Great but scary information wrapped up in a complex story told in easily digestible form – and a warning to all states. Excellent explanatory journalism.

Portland Press Herald, Portland, ME....."Breakdown Series"

The “Breakdown” series by The Portland Press Herald, in partnership with Maine Public and PBS’s “Frontline,” deserves a Publick Occurrences Award. Produced after the deadliest mass shooting in Maine’s history, the series attempts to answer crucial questions as to why the shooter was allowed to keep his guns and was not involuntarily committed for mental-health treatment despite numerous warning signs. The story is skillfully told through text, audio and video.

Concord Monitor Concord, NH....."Rethinking Rundlett"

A spectacular deep-dive by the Concord Monitor into a community's decision on a new middle school. This entry had it all - polling city residents, FAQ's, detailed cost explanation, a community forum, a daily summation of the coverage, an explainer video. Every angle was covered, including coverage of the minority community and an apples-to-apples look at a similar school in Nashua. Great range of voices from students, teachers, administrators and community members touched on all perspectives. This project is a shining example of local journalism's role in bringing information to people to help them make truly informed decisions about their communities. Tremendous work.

VTdigger, Montpelier, VT....."Special Education"

This complex story demonstrated, with real emotion, the frustrations of a family in dire need of very special education services for their child and the seeming indifference of administrators to meet those needs in any timely or adequate way. This well-written piece, mostly told through the eyes of one child and his family, blended in the context of high special education costs and lack of services data throughout without weighing the piece down. Really great to see the impact of the reporting spurred lawmakers to take action. But, also really sad to see that it took years for this family to get the educational attention their child needed and deserved. Really sad.

Seven Days, Burlington, VT....."From This Day Forward"

Seven Days' look at the anniversary of civil unions in Vermont. So much to like with this story - interviews with the three couples who were the plaintiffs in the legal battle and their lawyers, former state representatives who were on both sides of the issue and their reflections on their votes. Loved the story on the gay lawmaker whose 11-minute speech put a face on the issue. Coverage also included information on a planned forum and a request for reader input. While the cover letter presented this as an anniversary story, it was much more than that. It was a pointed reminder of the tears and sweat spent to make civil unions a reality in Vermont, spotlighting what we now recognize as the first step to push this country's acceptance of marriage equality. For those who didn't live it, this project is a must-read.

The Republican, Springfield, MA....."Highview Nursing Home"

A thorough look at the deficiencies at one of the worst nursing homes in Massachusetts. This entry had all the data, but more importantly lent voices to the horrible conditions with interviews from past patients and their families. The chart of the top 10 worst nursing homes in Mass. lent even more perspective to the story. And the Republican gave every opportunity for the company that ran the home to comment to help provide some balance. The appalling conditions, as tough as they were to read, serve as clear warning to those who are looking to place loved ones in nursing care that they can and must consider quality of care. Or, in the case of High View, the lack of quality.

MassLive, Springfield, MA....."Pill Presses"

Reporter Hadley Barndollar did a great job of pulling back the curtain to reveal how pill presses are used to produce illicit -- and lethal -- drugs that are sold on the street. Her reporting was well-sourced and got results, too, with legislators taking action and filing bills to address the issue. Especially impressive was the commitment on the part of the editors of this story, who authorized the purchase of a pill press from China so the reporters could demonstrate convincingly how easy it is to obtain one of these machines, showing the huge volume of drugs that they can produce. This story was hard-hitting and even surprising. Congrats to MassLive and Ms. Barndollar.

Seven Days, Burlington, VT....."A World Away"

This is a top-notch human-interest story with a historical bent and a Vermont base that explores the aftermath of U.S. involvement in Afghanistan and its failures. The interviews and the rest of the reporting are first-rate and bring the story's subjects to life for the reader. The photography is outstanding, and the story empowers the audience with a sidebar listing agencies that are assisting Afghan immigrants who are living in Vermont.

The Republican and New England Public Media, Springfield, MA

....."Robin Hood or Legalized Theft?"

Greta Jochem and Dusty Christensen's investigation into civil asset forfeiture was truly eye-opening. Through their sources and reporting, they exposed a system by which Massachusetts police can take property such as cars from private citizens on the thinnest of justifications. There is no real timeframe by which the police and DA's office must investigate and, if a seizure is unfair, return the property. Indeed, Jochem and Christensen showed that the system seems designed to keep the property for the benefit of law enforcement budgets, with little direct notification of owners. The excellent reporting, coupled with clear and well-designed graphics, must have inspired many readers to hang onto their wallets.

Seven Days, Burlington, VT....."The Straw Man"

Well-researched and compelling, "The Straw Man," by Joe Sexton takes a close look at the guns-for-drugs trade, a type of crime that typically doesn't get much press coverage. Sexton goes the extra mile by using in-depth reporting to tell the story of Dylan Russell and his repeat purchases of a wide variety of guns for others, acting as a "straw man" for drug dealers. The story of one addicted man purchasing guns in exchange for his own drugs forms the spine of Sexton's narrative, with other interviews with gun shop owners and law enforcement exposing flaws in Vermont's gun laws.

A-Mark Prizes

The A-Mark Prizes recognize and honor outstanding investigative journalism that reveals hidden truths, holds power to account, or drives public awareness or reform. The prizes reward ambitious, well-researched reporting that may expose a wrong, hold powerful individuals accountable, or explore a complex problem, issue, or subject.

The prizes available in each New England state are as follows:

- *1st Place: \$5,000 to journalist(s), \$2,500 to the outlet*
- *2nd Place: \$3,000 to journalist(s), \$1,500 to the outlet*
- *3rd Place: \$2,000 to journalist(s), \$1,000 to the outlet*

In this inaugural year, four states will receive prizes (CT, MA, RI, VT). We hope to gain enough entries in next year's competition to award prizes in all six New England states.

Connecticut



Jenna Carlesso, Dave Altimari, Katy Golvala and Andrew Brown

The Connecticut Mirror
Priced Out



Marc E. Fitch
CT Inside Investigator
Power Struggle



Dave Altimari and Ginny Monk

The Connecticut Mirror
On the Hook



A-Mark Prizes *Massachusetts*



Hadley Barndollar

MassLive

Pill Presses



**Maggie Mulvihill and
Journalism Class**
Boston University

When House Members Travel



The Republican.

Greta Jochem

The Republican

Highview Nursing Home



Generously sponsored by:



A-Mark Prizes

Rhode Island

Rhode Island **Current**

Alexander Castro

Rhode Island Current

RI Bridges Data Breach



The Providence Journal

Mark Reynolds

The Providence Journal

Domestic Murder Suicide



The Providence Journal

Jack Perry

The Providence Journal

Lost Jobs, Trump Cuts



Generously sponsored by:



A-Mark Prizes *Vermont*

vtdigger 

Carly Berlin

VTDigger

Emergency Shelters



**ADDISON COUNTY
INDEPENDENT**

John Flowers

Addison County Independent

Eva Vekos



SEVEN DAYS

Derek Brouwer

Seven Days

Billed and Bereft



Generously sponsored by:



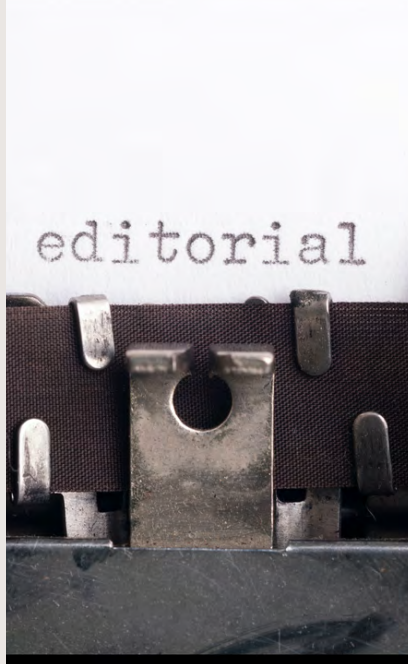
Allan B. Rogers Editorial Award

Recognizing the best editorial on a local subject that ran in New England in the past year. The award honors the editor of the Eagle-Tribune (North Andover, MA), who died in 1964 at the age of 31.

Consent Law **The Berkshire Eagle**

The Berkshire Eagle is the winner of the 2025 Allan B. Rogers Editorial Award for its moral leadership in calling for reform of Massachusetts' "consent law."

The initial editorial, "Miss Hall's scandal calls for hard look at consent law," reflects the community outrage over a loophole that allowed a teacher at a private school to avoid sexual assault criminal charges and goes further to offer a legislative solution for the future.



The editorial's strong position, which was careful to not assume guilt, includes a comparison of how neighboring Connecticut addresses age of consent issues. Editorials that go further than railing against an injustice to point to logical remedies underscore a newspaper's leadership role in the community.

A second editorial four months later, "Beacon Hill must move on Davis' age of consent bill" urged legislators to take action in a solid, persuasive, follow-up.

New England First Amendment Award

This award recognizes a New England news organization for its exceptional work upholding the First Amendment and/or educating the public about it.

Katherine Revello
**Connecticut Inside
Investigator**



From a strong field of entries, the Inside Investigator – and its reporter Katherine Revello – stand out for their wide and trenchant coverage of First Amendment and public records issues in Connecticut.

Over a 12-month period, Katherine published 156 articles for the news site, almost all of them focused on First Amendment policy or public records battles. She has written about freedom of information issues from both sides, not only recounting a citizen's battles for open meetings and a whistleblower's \$40,000 bill for government records, but also chronicling the vast trove of personal information accessible to a diligent public records researcher. At her instigation, the Investigator established a biweekly "Transparency Update" to inform readers about the newsroom's efforts to overcome barriers to transparency and potential violations of First Amendment rights.

Katherine also has railed against unconscionable delays in production of concededly public records, and has brought multiple access cases before Connecticut's Freedom of Information Commission. All the while, she has served as an internal resource for the newsroom, freely advising other reporters about how to use FOIA requests to report on matters of public concern. Katherine Revello has ensured that this non-profit news site lives up to its name: the Inside Investigator.

Bob Wallack Community Journalism Award

Robert Lowell

Community Reporter

Portland Press Herald



Named in honor of longtime New England journalist and former New England Press Association Executive Director Bob Wallack, this award recognizes an individual who has an exceptional record of commitment to community journalism. It celebrates the accomplishments of someone who, over a sustained period of time, has faithfully served the community for which they are responsible.

Robert Lowell is an outstanding and respected community news reporter who has faithfully served readers in local communities for 25 years.

He started off as a traditional print journalist for the weekly American Journal newspaper covering Gorham and Westbrook in southern Maine. A community reporter for the Maine Trust for Local News, Bob still covers the same region but has pivoted to write for a weekly digital newsletter, Westbrook-Gorham Now, which also includes an accompanying ePaper with his coverage. His stories also appear in the print edition and website for the Portland Press Herald, Maine's largest daily newspaper.

Bob's journalism career was launched while serving with the Navy. He was accepted at the Defense Department's School of Information and after graduating was assigned to two aircraft carriers. His responsibilities were mainly focused on producing press releases about crewmembers and missions of the ships. Bob was aboard the U.S.S. Essex in 1968 when it recovered the Apollo 7 splashdown, but not involved in that news coverage.

His final tour of duty was on the admiral's staff at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, where he prepared a daily briefing that a department lieutenant verbally presented to the admiral. He also edited a small paper, the Guantanamo Gazette, produced four days a week for the benefit of Marines and sailors stationed there.

Following discharge and several years of other pursuits, American Journal editor and publisher Harry Foote hired Bob in 2000. During the 25 years, a few of the notable stories Bob covered included Gorham seizing the property of former Maine governor Percival P. Baxter gifted the town as a park and the town turning into a parking lot; a Buxton puppy mill case; a missing Bonny Eagle High School girl's body found months later in the Saco River; opening of the Gorham bypass that diverted traffic around the village; and removal of the Star of David from a holiday light display in Westbrook.

Bob has faithfully served his communities as a journalist and truly cares for our readers. He deserves to be recognized for his longstanding efforts, which have carried on through traditional newspapers to new digital products.

The Cornerstone Award

Maile Hulihan

CEO, The Concord Bridge

A couple of days ago, I asked our CEO a question that I've asked her before and will probably ask again: "Why the hell did you take this job?"

It's certainly true that Maile doesn't need to be working seven days a week to help us reach our (daunting) goal of becoming a "best-in-class, non-profit, non-partisan newspaper that lasts forever because it's finely tuned to the needs of historic Concord, Mass."

When our board president started recruiting Maile, our future CEO had already been retired (mostly) and happy about it (very) for quite a while.

Maile's career had been exciting, challenging, and unique: It spanned both the editorial and business sides of news. That background was precisely what we needed. Concerned, good-hearted, generous pillars of our community had founded this paper, but making it a sustainable, next-level publication was going to require special experience.

True story: In early 2024, Maile took her first meeting with me by Zoom, propped up on pillows in her bed. Our president had finally convinced Maile that The Bridge desperately needed her, and she agreed to jump in — long before she had recovered from a hip replacement. She put her own comfort aside to plunge into working with us — and her work was cut out for her.



The guidelines for The Cornerstone Award say it's meant for a worthy recipient who works behind the scenes, and a CEO might not seem to fit the bill. But as someone who works with words all day, I'm nearly at a loss for the right ones to explain how much Maile does for The Bridge. The range of what Maile may tackle in a single day or week is astonishing. She is in actual fact the cornerstone of our operation.

"The range of what Maile may tackle in a single day or week is astonishing. She is in actual fact the cornerstone of our operation."

While we rebuilt and restructured the newspaper after her arrival, she showed herself able to advise or pinch-hit on every job at The Bridge, and that is true today. She dealt with our advertisers and hired a new sales director. She trained office concierges in handling spreadsheets and cranky callers. She negotiated with the printer, the landlord, and, of course, our board.

With her extensive financial experience, she untangled our complex budget and built it out — but she also orders healthy snacks for the newsroom. I've seen her take home the towels from our office bathroom to put in with her own laundry. She's hand-delivered newspapers in the rain.

This month, we celebrated Maile's birthday with a little cake in our newsroom. (She says women become "goddesses" when they turn 70.) We did it during a break from a strategic planning session she had set up to help our editorial crew set our priorities, learn from our errors, and map out the bright future of our fledgling experiment.

I asked my colleagues to just say a word or two about Maile. Not a single one hesitated.

A sampling:

- "I appreciate that, even in the role of CEO, Maile is accessible to everyone in the newsroom. She's always open to sharing her experience and expertise with us." — *Deputy Editor Christine M. Quirk*

- "She's an energetic leader who balances levity in the newsroom with ruthless attention to detail and commitment to our reporting. She's an experienced business reporter who brings both her technical experience and an eye for the common reader's interests to all editorial conversations."

— *Municipal Reporter Dakota Antelman*

- "Maile is someone who approaches journalism with a lot of heart. ... She understands that the role of a community newspaper is [to] make sure that every story is crafted with a local focus, and she looks back [to] see what can be learned for next time." — *Community Reporter Trace Salzbrenner*

- "I like that she is forward-thinking and knowledgeable in terms of embracing technology." — *Production Manager Kim Carpenter*

- "One thing I deeply appreciate about Maile is her support of the staff. She has offered praise in our Zoom meetings and in group emails, but she also reached out to me individually. ... She didn't have to do that, but she did, and it meant a lot." — *Copy Editor Rob Reinalda*

Dreamer of big dreams and arbiter of little disputes. Teacher. Coach. Cheerleader. Maile does it all — and, much more important, she teaches us to do it for ourselves.

The last time I asked Maile why she took this nutty job, she made a joke about giving in to Board President Alice Kaufman's irresistible powers of persuasion.

But then she actually answered the question: Democracy, she said, means something to her, and over the course of a long career, she had not felt before, as she does now, that it was under threat. She felt compelled to use her skills to do something good; to shore up democracy.

We, and our readers, are most fortunate that she did.

— *Celeste Katz Marston*
Editor-in-Chief
The Concord Bridge

The Cornerstone Award recognizes and honors unsung heroes in our news organizations who meaningfully and significantly contribute to the accomplishments of our publications without recognition. These individuals are the lifeblood of our operations, consistently providing the support and commitment needed to keep our departments and publications thriving.



New England Journalism Educator of the Year

Lara Salahi

Distinguished Professor of Journalism
Endicott College



A leading researcher in her field, Lara Salahi is also a committed educator and institution-builder. Her work inspires her colleagues, strengthens local news, and conveys her passion for reporting to the next generation of journalists.

In addition to being a world-class teacher, Lara remains active as a practicing journalist. Her students benefit from her ongoing work as a producer for NBC Boston/NECN and from her public-facing scholarship on high-stakes issues affecting both journalism and public health. In her prescient 2018 study *Outbreak Culture*, a post-mortem of the 2014-2016 Ebola epidemic, Lara identified the human and institutional failures that block public health interventions long before Covid-19 made these problems the subject of national discussion and debate. Her more recent work focuses on news-academic partnerships, an expression that first appeared in her work. Last fall, Lara was named an editor of news-academic partnership research at UVM's Center for Community News, and she made the case for a solutions-oriented approach to supporting local news before the Massachusetts State Legislature.

Lara's work as a public intellectual has translated into high-impact teaching, curriculum development, and program-building at her home institution. At Endicott, she holds the position of Distinguished Professor, but that august and well-deserved title does not reflect all the hands-on work she has done to build our Journalism program.

Five years ago, she founded one of the first news-academic partnerships in the country in her Beat Reporting class, which has burgeoned into a small-scale news service. In the most recent iteration of the course, students covered stories across 22 local cities and towns, and their work appeared in over 30 local news sites and newspapers across eastern Massachusetts. Through her tireless work to cultivate relationships with local outlets and earn the trust of their editors, Lara has helped to fill gaps in local news coverage and positioned students to put into practice the concepts they have learned within the classroom. She exemplifies the kind of experiential education for which Endicott is known.

Lara has advanced her program in significant ways just in the year since I became dean. She has developed an innovative Health Communication minor, which will expand career options for our Journalism majors, and created Endicott's first Young Journalists Workshop. The Workshop, in particular, was a labor of love that required Lara to market our program, recruit faculty, plan field trips, and teach multiple sessions. Thanks to this painstaking work, we were able to offer top-notch journalism education at a price that, when combined with scholarships that she helped secure, ensured access to any middle or high school student with a desire to participate.

Students often list Lara's classes as their most memorable at Endicott, which helps explain why she is able to stay connected to them well beyond graduation. She continues to serve as an unofficial mentor for many Endicott alumni, and our students

benefit from this network of news creators as they search for internships and jobs. This type of contribution is not sufficiently valued by traditional modes of faculty assessment, and Lara's commitment to it testifies to her investment in the future of journalism as a profession.

At a time when her field faces existential challenges, Lara's passion, energy, and commitment have allowed journalism education to thrive at Endicott. She has given her colleagues hope for a future in which higher education and local news sustain each other and the communities in which they are embedded. I hope that a public recognition of her groundbreaking work will help spread that vision beyond our campus.

— Samuel Alexander, Ph.D.
Associate Dean
Communication and Humanities
Endicott College

NENPA presents the New England Journalism Educator of the Year award on behalf of the Journalism Education Foundation of New England to recognize a professor at a university or college in the six-state region who is doing outstanding work to prepare journalists to lead our newspaper organizations into the future.



New England Newspaper and Press Association

P.O. Box 2505
Woburn, MA 01888

www.nenpa.com
info@nenpa.com
[@nenpa](#)

