

## 2025 Excellence in Journalism

# ‘CALL FOR SCHOLARSHIP ENTRIES’

*Sponsored by the Detroit chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists*

Detroit SPJ is accepting entries and nominations for its 2025 **Larry Laurain Scholarship** program. Winners will be announced at the organization’s annual banquet honoring the outstanding work and achievements in 2023 of print, broadcast, photo, digital and other practicing journalists in Michigan. In addition, Detroit SPJ will announce its Journalist of the Year and Young Journalist of the Year.

Winners in all categories and scholarship winners will be honored at our annual awards banquet on Wednesday, May 14, at the San Marino Club, 1685 E. Big Beaver Rd, Troy

**Scholarship application deadline: Thursday, Feb. 28, 2025**

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## General Information

SPJ Detroit annually awards a \$2,500 grant to a Michigan resident who is or will be a sophomore, junior or senior with a demonstrated interest in journalism attending a college or university. This award may be used at any institution of higher education.

The chapter maintains the right to offer more scholarships as permitted.

The award honors the late Lawrence (Larry) A. Laurain, who was serving as president of the Detroit chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists at the time of his death in August 1985 of esophageal cancer. His journalism career spanned 17 years, including stints at the Royal Oak Daily Tribune, the Macomb Daily, United Press International and finally as city editor of the Oakland Press.

**Call for Entries** -- Applicants must intend to practice journalism, as evidenced by enrollment in journalism classes and by work from those classes, or by work produced for student or professional publications in the past year. Financial needs are also considered.

□ Applications must be submitted through the BetterBNC contest website. See instructions on Page 2. □  
No entry fee is required.

### Applications must include:

1. **A resume.**
2. **Portfolio.** At least three clips of any published or classroom-produced samples of the applicant’s writing or other news-related reporting produced in the past calendar year.
3. **Supporting documents.** At least three documents, such as letters of recommendation or other statements from teachers, deans and advisers who are familiar with the applicant’s work. At least one of these documents must affirm the applicant’s enrollment in a journalism class, academic status, or purported interest in journalism.
4. **Personal narrative/essay.** A double-spaced, titled document that addresses any of the issues cited below.

### An applicant’s personal narrative should address any of the following points: ●

Why do you want to be a journalist?

- What are your career goals after graduation?
- Describe your journalism-related activities and how they have advanced your journalist training.

- List your educational, campus and social activities with brief details of their influence on you.
- Describe the most important challenge facing journalists today.
- Identify the person in journalism you would most like to emulate and why?
- What would winning this award mean to you?

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Questions? Call (734-277-5922) or e-mail [spjdetroit@gmail.com](mailto:spjdetroit@gmail.com)

## **SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS**

### **BETTERBNC -- CONTESTANT INSTRUCTIONS**

Entries to the Excellence in Journalism will be submitted using BetterBNC Media Awards Platform. Below are directions for preparing and submitting entries. If you have questions, please contact us at: [SPJDetroit@gmail.com](mailto:SPJDetroit@gmail.com)  
 IMPORTANT: BetterBNC is optimized for the Google Chrome browser and Firefox for PC and Macintosh/Apple. Please have a recent version downloaded and installed for the best contest experience.

#### **1. Login**

- a. Go to [www.betterbnc.com](http://www.betterbnc.com).
- b. Open Call Login:
  1. Click "Open Call Login" in the blue bar at the top of the page.
  2. If you already have an Open Call Contestant account, enter your email address and password, then click "Login" and skip to section "g. Request to make entries in a contest" below.
  3. If you do not already have an Open Call Contestant account, click "Create your Open Call account"
  4. Fill out the form
  5. Click "Submit" at the bottom of the page

Once you fill out the form to create your Open Call Contestant account, the system will send you a validation email with a link that must be clicked before you can log into your account.

- c. Request to make entries in a contest (Open Call Only):
  1. Hover over the red "Open Call Contestant" text in the blue bar at the top of the page
2. Select "My Contests" in the menu that appears
3. In the "Available Contests" section, check the box next to the contest you would like to enter
4. Hover over the red "Open Call Contestant" text again
5. Select "Manage Entries"

#### **2. Submit Entries**

- a. Click "Submit Entry" from the Manage Entries page
- b. Select a Division (group of Categories)
- c. Select a Category
- d. Select the Media Organization where the entry was published or performed (Open Call Only)
- e. Enter the entry headline or title
- f. Add entry content (may vary by category)
  1. To upload digital file attachments (other than audio/video), click "Browse", navigate to the desired file, and then click "Open". Allowed file types are PDF, DOC/DOCX, TXT, JPG, GIF, and PNG. To upload additional attachments to a single entry, click the "Browse and Attach More Files" button. BetterBNC will allow up to about a 20MB file, however, we suggest keeping your files around 5MB in case the judges have a slow connection. For files larger than 20MB, you can click the "RealView" icon on the Submit Entry page to create a free account, upload your files, and then copy and paste the URL into the URL field on the Submit Entry page. You may also use a similar 3rd-party website that provides hosting services (scribd.com, issuu.com, etc.)
  2. To add web/audio/video content, copy and paste the content's URL address into the provided Website URL field. To host your content online, either upload it to a free streaming content website (e.g. YouTube) or talk to your IT person about adding it to your stations/publications website. Make sure the content will be accessible online throughout the duration of the contest and awards process. Here are some examples of free streaming content websites where you can upload audio and video content:
    - a. Audio: [www.kiwi6.com](http://www.kiwi6.com), [www.tindeck.com](http://www.tindeck.com)
    - b. Video: [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com), [www.vimeo.com](http://www.vimeo.com)

- 3. IMPORTANT:** Please be sure that items are not behind a paywall or a password-protected area. If they are, you must provide username/password info in the Comments section of your entry. Judges may disqualify your entry if work samples are inaccessible.
- g. Add Comments
  - h. Enter Credits
  - i. Click "Submit Entry". For hardcopy/mail-in entry categories, print and attach the entry label (which automatically appears after each entry is submitted) to each hardcopy item and follow contest shipping instructions (contact the contest administrator for more info).