



## CRMA AND THE MISSOURI SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM ANNOUNCE AWARD FINALISTS

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### 2026 National City and Regional Magazine Awards Finalists

Magazine professionals from around the country chose 190 finalists representing 29 publications in the 41-year-old City and Regional Magazine Association's national awards competition. Magazines of varying circulations competed in 38 categories, including writing, design, editorial and best of show divisions. Judges named five finalists in each category and will choose one ultimate winner in each. The winners for work completed in 2025 will be announced at CRMA's 50th Annual Conference to take place May 30-June 1 at the New Orleans Marriott in the French Quarter.

Topping this year's list of finalists with double-digit selections were *5280*, *Boston*, *Chicago magazine*, *D Magazine*, *Philadelphia magazine*, *St. Louis Magazine*, *Texas Highways* and *Texas Monthly*. Magazines with five or more selections include *Baltimore magazine*, *Madison Magazine*, *Milwaukee Magazine*, *Rhode Island Monthly* and *Washingtonian*.

*Palm Springs Life* received four finalist selections. *dsm magazine*, *Hour Detroit*, *Kansas City magazine* and *Mpls.St.Paul Magazine* received three finalist selections. The magazines that were named finalists in two categories include *D CEO*, *Hudson Valley magazine*, *New Orleans Magazine*, *Pittsburgh Magazine* and *Yankee Magazine*. Finally, *Bend Magazine*, *Cleveland Magazine*, *Fort Worth Magazine*, *Omaha Magazine*, *Santa Fe Magazine* and *Sonoma Magazine* all received one finalist selection.

This year's finalists covered topics such as:

- A woman's lifelong search for her father's remains after he was shot down in the Vietnam War
- The divide between ranchers and conservationists over wolf reintroduction in Colorado
- A night of ritualized drinking that ended with a fraternity member drowning
- Boston's first African immigrant city councilor who was sentenced in a kickback scheme
- A ban on donating used books to prison inmates in Wisconsin
- A hog-calling contest with the winning squeal becoming part of a major mobile video game
- The history of Bock beer's connection to goat imagery

Other contenders focused on the tumultuous journey to summit the world's 14 highest peaks, the art of creating prosthetics that make people feel whole again and a deadly tornado that tore through the heart of St. Louis.

More than 100 judges selected the finalists. They included representatives from publications and media outlets such as *24/7 Tempo*, *AARP the Magazine*, *Advertising Age*, *The Americas Quarterly*, *The Atavist*, *The Atlantic*, *Better Homes & Gardens*, *Bloomberg Businessweek*, *Bloomberg Green*, *CityLab*, *Elle Magazine*, Emerson Collective, ESPN, Food Network, *Food & Wine Magazine*, *Forbes*, *Game & Fish*, *Garden & Gun*, *Hearst Magazines, Inc. Magazine*, Investigative Reporters and Editors, Kalmbach Media, The Marshall Project, *Men's Health*, *Midwest Living*, *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, *National Geographic Magazine*, *New Mexico Magazine*, *The New Yorker*,

*The New York Times, Outdoor Life, Pets, Pioneer Woman, Psychology Today, Racquet Sporting Press, Spot On Media, Tennis Magazine, Time Magazine, The Washington Post* as well as journalism professors from the Missouri School of Journalism.

The competition is open to members of the City and Regional Magazine Association. The national competition has been in existence for 41 years and has been coordinated by the Missouri School of Journalism on behalf of CRMA for the past 30 years.

**The categories and finalists are:**

**Essays/Commentary/Criticism**

*Chicago magazine*

“The Mighty Del-Crustaceans” (Rick Telander)

*Philadelphia magazine*

“Stumbling Blocks” (Jen Kinney)

*Philadelphia magazine*

“Surviving Trump” (Tom McGrath)

*Texas Monthly*

“Something Went Wrong” (Stephen Harrigan)

*Yankee Magazine*

“The Name We Carry” (Erin Gottwald)

**Food or Dining Writing**

*Chicago magazine*

(John Kessler)

“The Case for Reviewing While High”

“Living Large”

“The Best New Restaurants”

*D Magazine*

(Brian Reinhart)

“Same Time Next Week”

“Steakhouse Boulevard”

“My Six Weeks as a Dallas Vegetarian”

*Mpls.St.Paul Magazine*

(Dara Moskowitz Grumdahl)

“Beyond Pastry”

“The Unsinkable Molly Broder”

“Lake Street Phoenix”

*Philadelphia magazine*

(Jason Sheehan)

“Piece by Piece”

“Hunger Pangs”

“Every Meal a Story”

*Texas Monthly*

(Paula Forbes)

“Texas Wine Grows Up”

“What a \$20 Million Steak Tastes Like”

“How Chili’s Won Gen Z—and the Casual-Chain Restaurant Wars”

**Herb Lipson Award for Column Excellence**

*Cleveland Magazine*

(Dillon Stewart)

“Home Waters”

“The Impact of Cleveland Magazine’s Founding Editor”

“All My Heroes Are (Almost) Gone: Reflections on Willie Nelson and Bob Dylan in Cleveland”

*Madison Magazine*

(Emma Waldinger)  
“Buzz Buzz”  
“Food Heals”  
“Save Your Appetite”

*Philadelphia magazine*

(Sandy Hingston)  
“Weird New World”  
“Make America Kind Again”  
“Liberation Day”

*Pittsburgh Magazine*

(Virginia Montanez)  
“Wrestling with the Complicated Legacy of Andrew Carnegie”  
“Why the Anti-Science Movement Is an Insult to Our History and Achievements”  
“The Stories of Individuals Who Worked Hard, Dangerous Jobs to Build Pittsburgh”

*Texas Monthly*

(Josh Alvarez)  
“Hunting Feral Hogs by Any Means Necessary”  
“My First Deer Hunt”  
“We Are No Match for the Invasive Lionfish, the Feral Hog of the Sea”

### **Short Writing Lifestyle**

*Chicago magazine*

“Meet the Bard of the Park District Bathrooms”

*D Magazine*

(Edward McClelland)

*dsm magazine*

“Hot Dish!” (Tim Rogers)

*St. Louis Magazine*

“The Oink Heard ’Round the World” (Michael Morain)

*Texas Monthly*

“Past Is Present” (Christine Jackson)

“Shiner Beer Says Its Bock Is the GOAT. So Why Does Its New Ad (and Iconic Logo) Feature a Sheep?”

(Sasha von Oldershausen)

### **Short Writing News**

*Chicago magazine*

“Chicago Is Organizing for All” (Edward McClelland)

*Chicago magazine*

“We Won’t Survive If You Don’t Support Us” (Ximena N. Beltran Quan Kiu)

*Texas Monthly*

“Not Floodwaters, Not Loss of Life, Not Catastrophic Storms” (Allegra Hobbs)

*Washingtonian*

“‘Be Careful How You Talk to Us:’ Trump Appointee Gets an Earful in Anacostia” (Ike Allen)

*Washingtonian*

“Is the Political Cocktail Dead?” (Jessica Sidman)

### **Reporting**

*5280*

“Wolf Wars” (Rose Cahalan)

*Boston*

“Greek Tragedy” (Susan Zalkind, Chris Vogel)

*Madison Magazine*

“Return to Sender” (Jeff Oloizia)

*Texas Monthly*

“The Final Flight of Captain Forrester” (Josh Alvarez)

*Washingtonian*

“Institutional Failure” (Luke Mullins)

**Profile (Circulation less than 33,000)**

<i>Baltimore magazine</i>	“To the Core” (Lydia Woolever)
<i>D CEO</i>	“Don’t Tell Tiffany Derry No” (Ben Swanger)
<i>dsm magazine</i>	“Dickiebird Takes Flight” (Michael Morain, Hailey Evans, Anthony Taylor, Annabel Wimer)
<i>Pittsburgh Magazine</i>	“Christina Cassotis Pittsburgher of the Year” (Cristina Rouvalis)
<i>St. Louis Magazine</i>	“Will St. Louis Love a Mike Kehoe Deal?” (Nicholas Phillips)

**Profile (Circulation more than 33,000)**

<i>5280</i>	“The Unlikely Ascent of Tracee Metcalfe” (Devon O’Neil, Spencer Campbell)
<i>Boston</i>	“The Price of \$7,000” (Catherine Elton, Chris Vogel)
<i>Chicago magazine</i>	“Chrishona Hodges’s Life Sentence” (Elly Fishman)
<i>Chicago magazine</i>	“The Tragedy of Lil Durk” (David Bernstein)
<i>Texas Monthly</i>	“Where There’s Smoke” (Emily McCullar)

**Feature Story (Circulation less than 33,000)**

<i>Baltimore magazine</i>	“Crafting Hope” (Jane Marion)
<i>Omaha Magazine</i>	“Targeted for Removal” (Natalie Veloso)
<i>Rhode Island Monthly</i>	“South County Succession” (Tom Mooney)
<i>Sonoma Magazine</i>	“The Vendor” (John Beck, Raquel Issenberg, Erik Castro)
<i>St. Louis Magazine</i>	“The Power & The Fury” (Jeannette Cooperman)

**Feature Story (Circulation more than 33,000)**

<i>5280</i>	“The Shroom Boom” (Robert Sanchez)
<i>Chicago magazine</i>	“The Great AI Art Heist” (Kelley Engelbrecht)
<i>Texas Monthly</i>	“Where Jason Went” (Peter Holley)
<i>Texas Monthly</i>	“Where the River Took Us” (Aaron Parsley)
<i>Washingtonian</i>	“The Missing Men of Mount Pleasant” (Bo Erickson)

**Writer of the Year**

<i>5280</i>	Robert Sanchez
<i>D Magazine</i>	Mike Piellucci
<i>Mpls.St.Paul Magazine</i>	Steve Marsh
<i>Texas Monthly</i>	Michael Hall
<i>Texas Monthly</i>	Mimi Swartz

**Excellence in Writing**

<i>5280</i>	June
<i>D Magazine</i>	October
<i>Philadelphia magazine</i>	September
<i>Texas Highways</i>	October
<i>Texas Monthly</i>	August

**Spread Design (Circulation less than 33,000)**

<i>Baltimore magazine</i>	“Stavvy Baby!” (Amanda White-Iseli, Matt Roth)
<i>New Orleans Magazine</i>	“Rise + Shine” (Tiffani Reding Amedeo)
<i>Palm Springs Life</i>	“The Glad Hatter of the High Desert” (Anna Kula)
<i>St. Louis Magazine</i>	“Paddle-Tested” (Tom White)
<i>St. Louis Magazine</i>	“Shooting Scenes” (Tom White)

### **Spread Design (Circulation more than 33,000)**

<i>Boston</i>	“The Price of \$7,000” (Benjamin Purvis, Chris Vogel)
<i>Chicago magazine</i>	“The Great AI Art Heist” (David Syrek)
<i>Philadelphia magazine</i>	“Piece by Piece” (Jamie Leary, Jason Sheehan)
<i>Texas Monthly</i>	“Opal Lee Marches On” (Jenn Hair Tompkins, Shayan Asgharnia)
<i>Yankee Magazine</i>	“Silent Witness” (McCandliss & Campbell, Katharine Van Itallie)

### **Feature Design (Circulation less than 33,000)**

<i>Baltimore magazine</i>	“Crafting Hope” (Amanda White-Iseli, Justin Tsucalas)
<i>D CEO</i>	“The New Energy Barons” (Hamilton Hedrick)
<i>New Orleans Magazine</i>	“Best of Dining” (Tiffani Reding Amedeo)
<i>St. Louis Magazine</i>	“Fall & Winter Arts Guide” (Emily Wells)
<i>St. Louis Magazine</i>	“The Power & the Fury” (Tom White)

### **Feature Design (Circulation more than 33,000)**

<i>Boston</i>	“The New England Seafood Bible” (Rachel Leah Blumenthal, Jacqueline Cain, Wyndham Lewis, Brittany Jasnoff, Chris Vogel)
<i>Boston</i>	“The Relentless, (Sometimes) Lucrative, Surprisingly Wild World of Boston Influencers” (Carly Carioli, Kara Baskin, Camille Doder, Brittany Jasnoff, Chris Vogel)
<i>Texas Highways</i>	“By Design” (Sara D’Eugenio, Shelby Loveland, Nathan Lindstrom, Sydney Brown)
<i>Texas Monthly</i>	“The 50 Best BBQ Joints in Texas” (Victoria Millner, Brittany Conerly, Abraham Lule, Super Freak)
<i>Texas Monthly</i>	“What Our Schools Actually Need” (Jenn Hair Tompkins, Jeffrey McWhorter, Nash Weerasekera, Desiree Rios)

### **Photography**

<i>5280</i>	“Blowin’ in the Wind” (Theo Stroomer, David McKenna)
<i>5280</i>	“The Things We Leave Behind” (Kaylinn Gilstrap, David McKenna)
<i>Chicago magazine</i>	“Mi Familia” (Jennifer Teresa Villanueva)
<i>Philadelphia magazine</i>	“A Night to Remember” (Dina Litovsky)
<i>Texas Highways</i>	“Gone in Seven Seconds” (Sean Fitzgerald)

### **Illustration and Graphics**

<i>Palm Springs Life</i>	“Everything Must Go (Even the Secrets),” “All Shook Up!” “Gold Fever”
<i>Philadelphia magazine</i>	“Make America Kind Again,” “Best of Philly,” “Pressure Points”
<i>St. Louis Magazine</i>	“Paddle-Tested,” “Summer Fun,” “The Path of the Storm”
<i>Texas Monthly</i>	“Ambassadors of Violence,” “The King of X,” “The Town Fire”
<i>Washingtonian</i>	“All In,” “Inside a Luxury Estate,” “The DC Restaurant Trump Slump”

**Cover Excellence (Circulation less than 33,000)**

<i>Baltimore magazine</i>	March, August, November
<i>Hour Detroit</i>	July, August, September
<i>Kansas City magazine</i>	July, August, November
<i>Madison Magazine</i>	June, October, November
<i>Rhode Island Monthly</i>	March, July, August

**Cover Excellence (Circulation more than 33,000)**

<i>Boston</i>	March, July, August
<i>D Magazine</i>	May, October, December
<i>Philadelphia magazine</i>	March, July, September
<i>Texas Monthly</i>	February, May, December
<i>Washingtonian</i>	January, July, August

**Designer of the Year**

<i>5280</i>	David McKenna
<i>Boston</i>	Benjamin Purvis
<i>St. Louis Magazine</i>	Tom White
<i>Texas Highways</i>	Mark Mahorsky
<i>Texas Monthly</i>	Jenn Hair Tompkins

**Excellence in Design**

<i>St. Louis Magazine</i>	March
<i>Texas Highways</i>	July/August
<i>Texas Highways</i>	September
<i>Texas Monthly</i>	June
<i>Texas Monthly</i>	November

**Magazine Section**

<i>5280</i>	“Compass” (October, November)
<i>Mpls.St.Paul Magazine</i>	“Talk” (August, September)
<i>Texas Highways</i>	“Postcards” (May, June)
<i>Texas Highways</i>	“Roadmap” (January/February, March)
<i>Texas Monthly</i>	“Explorer” (January, February)

**Food or Dining Section**

<i>Chicago magazine</i>	“Table” (August, September)
<i>Hour Detroit</i>	“Food & Drink” (October, November)
<i>Kansas City magazine</i>	“Savor” (February, March)
<i>Milwaukee Magazine</i>	“The Dish” (August, September)
<i>Texas Highways</i>	“Fuel” (January/February, March)

**Reader Service**

<i>5280</i>	“Taking the High Trail” (Daliah Singer, Jessica LaRusso)
<i>Boston</i>	“The Great Menopause B(l)oom” (Kara Baskin, Brittany Jasnoff, Chris Vogel)
<i>Chicago magazine</i>	“Choose Your Own Spa Day” (Kelly Aiglon, Elizabeth Carlisle, Evan Sheehan)
<i>Philadelphia magazine</i>	“The Great Philly Sticker Shock” (Ben Seal, Sandy Smith)
<i>St. Louis Magazine</i>	“St. Louis Tornado 2025” (St. Louis Magazine Staff)

**Leisure/Lifestyle/Interests (Circulation less than 33,000)**

<i>Baltimore magazine</i>	“Long Live the Rowhome” (Lydia Woolever)
<i>Hudson Valley magazine</i>	“Field of Dreams” (Michelle Gillan Larkin, Linda Fears, Megan Wilson, Andrea Amadio)
<i>Hudson Valley magazine</i>	“The Experts’ Guide to Treasure Hunting” (Linda Fears, Michelle Gillan Larkin, Megan Wilson, Andrea Amadio, Janet Siroto)
<i>Rhode Island Monthly</i>	“Get Inked!” (Kaitlyn Murray, Tess Lyons)
<i>Rhode Island Monthly</i>	“Remembering Rocky Point” (Dana Laverty, Lauren Clem, Kaitlyn Murray)

**Leisure/Lifestyle/Interests (Circulation more than 33,000)**

<i>5280</i>	“Season of the Witch” (Rose Cahalan, Jessica LaRusso)
<i>Boston</i>	“The Lake Effect” (Brittany Jasnoff, Chris Vogel, Madeline Bilis, Miles Howard, Jacqueline Cain)
<i>Chicago magazine</i>	“The Best of Fall” (Web Behrens, Elizabeth Carlisle, David Syrek)
<i>Philadelphia magazine</i>	“Live Aid, Four Decades Later” (Victor Fiorillo)
<i>Texas Monthly</i>	“Meet the Texperts” (Kathy Blackwell, Jenn Tompkins, Katy Vine)

**Feature Package**

<i>5280</i>	“Hurts Sooooo Good”
<i>Boston</i>	“How to Grab the Golden Egg”
<i>Milwaukee Magazine</i>	“Hidden Milwaukee”
<i>Texas Highways</i>	“Everything Big, Bigger, and Biggest”
<i>Texas Monthly</i>	“What Our Schools Actually Need”

**Food or Dining Feature Package (Circulation less than 33,000)**

<i>Baltimore magazine</i>	“Blue Streak” (Jane Marion)
<i>Kansas City magazine</i>	“Holy Smokes” (Dawnya Bartsch, Tyler Shane, Kevin Goodbar)
<i>Madison Magazine</i>	“What Makes a Supper Club a Supper Club?” (Andrea Behling)
<i>Milwaukee Magazine</i>	“The Best Burgers!” (Ann Christenson, Chelsea Mamerow, Marty Peters)
<i>Milwaukee Magazine</i>	“What to Eat Now” (Ann Christenson, Chelsea Mamerow, Marty Peters, Sophie Yufa)

**Food or Dining Feature Package (Circulation more than 33,000)**

<i>5280</i>	“Less Is More” (Jessica LaRusso, David McKenna, Sarah Banks, Charli Ornett)
<i>Boston</i>	“In the Weeds” (Erika Adams, Chris Vogel)
<i>D Magazine</i>	“The Best 28 BBQ Joints in North Texas” (Brian Reinhart, Nancy Nichols, Kathy Wise, Matt Goodman, Mike Pielluci, Tim Rogers)
<i>Philadelphia magazine</i>	“Delco” (Kae Lani Palmisano)
<i>Philadelphia magazine</i>	“Shaking Things Up” (Kae Lani Palmisano)

### **Civic Journalism**

*Boston*

*Chicago magazine*

*Philadelphia magazine*

*Philadelphia magazine*

*Texas Monthly*

“Toxic Touch” (Colman M. Herman, Chris Vogel)

“Doors Closing” (Tal Rosenberg, Clarissa Bonet, Alex Garcia, David Syrek)

“Highway to Hell” (David Murrell)

“The Climate Crisis Is Here” (Ben Seal)

“A Painful Ending” (Laura Beil, J.K. Nickell)

### **Special Issue**

*Boston*

*D Magazine*

*Philadelphia magazine*

*Texas Highways*

*Texas Highways*

“Best of Boston” (July)

“The Cowboy Issue” (May)

“Best of Philly” (August)

“The BIG Issue” (July)

“The Music Issue” (September)

### **Ancillary Publication**

*Baltimore magazine*

*Boston*

*Chicago magazine*

*D Magazine*

*Philadelphia magazine*

*Baltimore Weddings*

*Boston Home* (Summer 2025)

*The Chicago Cookbook*

*D CEO* (Sports Business)

*Philadelphia Wedding* (Summer/Fall)

### **Online Excellence**

*Chicago magazine*

*D Magazine*

*Palm Springs Life*

*Philadelphia magazine*

*Texas Monthly*

*chicagomag.com*

*dmagazine.com*

*palmspringslife.com*

*phillymag.com*

*texasmonthly.com*

### **Newsletter Excellence**

*Chicago magazine*

*D Magazine*

*dsm magazine*

*St. Louis Magazine*

*St. Louis Magazine*

“Dish”

“D Brief”

“dsm Dish”

“Family”

“Outdoors”

### **General Excellence 1 (Circulation less than 18,000)**

*Bend Magazine*

*Fort Worth Magazine*

*Madison Magazine*

*Palm Springs Life*

*Santa Fe Magazine*

### **General Excellence 2 (Circulation 18,000 to 33,000)**

*Baltimore magazine*

*Hour Detroit*

*Milwaukee Magazine*

*Rhode Island Monthly*

*St. Louis Magazine*

**General Excellence 3 (Circulation more than 33,000)**

*Boston*

*D Magazine*

*Philadelphia magazine*

*Texas Highways*

*Texas Monthly*

For more information, contact CRMA Awards Contest Faculty Coordinator Jennifer Rowe, Missouri School of Journalism, 211 Lee Hills Hall, Columbia, MO 65211 (573-882-6839) [rowej@missouri.edu](mailto:rowej@missouri.edu) or CRMA Executive Director Cate Sanderson, 287 Richards Avenue, Norwalk, CT 06850 (203-515-9294) [sandersonmgt@gmail.com](mailto:sandersonmgt@gmail.com).