

THE ALLIANCE OF AREA BUSINESS PUBLISHERS
2019 EDITORIAL EXCELLENCE AWARDS LIST OF WINNERS

DESIGN CATEGORIES

1. Best magazine cover

Bronze: *Insight on Business*; “We’re 10”; Brian Rasmussen, MaryBeth Matzek, Jessica Thiel, Bryan Aschenbrenner

Pristine execution propels this design, with crisp portraits, a harmonious color palette and clear typographic hierarchy. Creating two separate executions was ambitious, and the version with the inset subject looking up toward the other person is particularly effective.

Silver: *Twin Cities Business*; “Meet the Neighbors”; Chris Winn

The overall concept illustrates the story effectively with a clear sense of the density and proportion suggested by the headline. The visual perspective also gives the cover an illusion of depth, and the color palette is striking.

Gold: *Hawaii Business*; “Building for Climate Change”; Janelle Kalawe-Ching, creative director, Kelsey Ige, art director, Michael Byers, illustrator

This fantastic illustration combines storytelling, humor and a wonderful color palette in a way that pushes the envelope. It captures the eye and rewards those who look closer. Combined with a well-positioned headline, the art communicates the story in a really creative way. Making the rising water engulf the magazine’s nameplate adds to the cleverness of the design.

2. Best feature layout – magazine

Bronze: *Florida Trend*; “Florida’s Water Future”; Gary Bernloehr, Jason Morton

The water-line visual ties together the pages and creates consistency, and strong photographs anchor each spread. Small sections are arranged to facilitate reading, and headlines break the package into clearly-defined, manageable chunks. There is good use of subtle color.

Silver: *Twin Cities Business*; “Gut Instinct”; Chris Winn

A lively, beautifully-composed image sets the scene and introduces the story. White space on the opening spread steers readers toward the content and sophisticated typographic treatment. Consistent design on the second and third spreads tie the layouts together and create a clear path for the reader. The helpful map and additional photographs add storytelling elements.

Gold: *Hawaii Business*; “Two Jobs”; Janelle Kalawe-Ching, Aaron Yoshino

The split portraits are a fun and clever way to visually tell this story. The sidebar list is particularly informative and organized, adding crucial information. Design is lively and contemporary and places emphasis on the story and visuals. The use of color is restrained and works for the content. This is visually exciting from start to finish.

3. Best overall design – magazine

Bronze: *Business North Carolina*; Kathryn Galloway, David Mildenberg, Cathy Martin, Taylor Wanbough, Moira Johnson, Ben Kinney

Overall, the visual design gives the publication a sense of sophistication. A wonderful sense of humor can be found in the visual design and photography. There is a nice sense of visual variety, with custom type treatments and headlines and clear organization of information. The “Horse Power” issue, for example, features a nice mix of visuals including a beautiful headline treatment and strong photography.

Silver: *dbusiness Magazine*; Austin Phillips

The paper used for the cover stock helps to elevate the publication, and adds nice depth and quality to the cover photographs and design. On the interior, feature designs are consistently distinguished by design elements that are thoughtful and story-appropriate. Shining examples include the “Powered by Women” feature that utilizes dynamic photographic techniques and composition to make the subjects seem like the superheroes.

Gold: *Hawaii Business*; Janelle Kalawe-Ching, Creative Director, Kelsey Ige, Art Director, Lillian Cheng, Associate Art Director Amy Ngo, Associate Art Director

The depth and variety of the design, photography, illustration, and visual layouts make for a rich and rewarding experience. Yet there remains a consistency of brand that is deliberate and well-devised. Additionally, there is strong conceptual thinking and art direction in the cover design and feature spreads, beautiful typesetting, engaging infographics, and compelling use of illustration.

4. Best front page – newspaper

Bronze: *Crain’s Chicago Business*; Thomas J. Linden, John Reinfurt

This page blends a clever illustration with unique style and isometric design to communicate a techie, Silicon Valley vibe. Teasers and other elements are combined with the main elements in a way that makes the overall layout effective. The headline is good as it emphasizes Lyft and other contributors to gridlock.

Silver: *Crain’s New York Business*; Carolyn McClain, Brendan O’Connor

Subway cars filled with Amazon boxes combine two iconic elements on this full-bleed cover. The design is effective, and the subtle concept produces a nice, slow reveal for the readers about the implications of a commuter train filled with packages.

Gold: *Crain’s Cleveland Business*; David Kordalski, John Ferguson, Dan Shingler

The minimalist design of the illustration is unusual and effective. The idea of a power struggle is communicated clearly by the stark contrast of white against the dark limited color palette. Leading lines within the illustration move the eye around the page and directly to the headline.

5. Best feature layout – newspaper

Bronze: *Crain’s Chicago Business*; “40 under 40”; Karen Freese

Creative use of location and studio portraits enlivens this annual feature. In addition to the subjects' poses, the backgrounds and lighting are carefully directed, allowing an overall page design that is consistent but varied. The package also has an excellent logo and typography.

Silver: *BizTimes Milwaukee*; "Wisconsin's health care squeeze"; Shelly Tabor

The illustrations are fun and use the same consistent tone throughout. Unity is created by the color palette and the red strip identifying the package as the cover story. Clever use of condensed type on the headline plays off the idea of a "squeeze"

Gold: *Crain's Cleveland Business*; "Book of Lists"; David Kordalski and Daniel Zakroczemski

The combination of photos and illustrations along with large title type provides impact. The use of infographics helps tell the story in a visual and easy-to-read manner. This package uses all the designer's tools in a professional way.

6a. Best overall design: small tabloids

No bronze or silver award.

Gold: *Greater Wilmington Business Journal*; Suzi Drake

Solid typographic design, well-considered headlines and strategic ad placement help organize the content. The strong use of white space elevates the feel of the publication, and visuals are displayed well. Infographics are a strength, as seen in the "Economic Indicators" graphs.

6b. Best overall design: medium tabloids

Bronze: *Mainebiz*; Peter Van Allen, Matt Selva

This is a well-organized publication that makes effective use of color-coded sections, clean aesthetic style, and carefully considered use of whitespace. It all adds up to an easy-to-navigate and pleasing reader experience. A stand-out feature included the "Maine Factbook" that was clear, well-handled, and utilized attractive side bars, and pull-quotes. There is a consistent strategic use of color throughout to great effect.

Silver: *San Fernando Valley Business Journal*; Nina Bays, Marci Shrager

From page one, this publication utilizes thoughtful compositional elements that include sophisticated typesetting and style in the body copy, subheads, and throughout each issue. There's a nice balance of visual consistency and variety. Even though there are varied covers throughout the issues, there is still a solid sense of brand and visual hierarchy. The spotlight and cover stories consistently draw the reader in. The design of each issue features something on every page that captures attention. A stand-out feature included the "50 Fastest Growing Companies" spread which included supporting lists, iconography, and clear graphic treatments.

Gold: *BizTimes Milwaukee*; Shelly Tabor, Alex Schneider

The overall design is neat and controlled. There's a well-regulated and consistently good design style throughout. Well-placed, metered elements of creativity like the creative headlines used in the "Ransomware" story add to the reader experience without taking away, and

demonstrate the close attention that is given to the layout of each article in the publication. Covers like “Guac is Good” grab attention and add a nice element of newsstand appeal.

6c. Best overall design: large tabloids

Bronze: Indianapolis Business Journal; IBJ Staff

Within the multiple-element news front anchored by a major take-out story, the staff effectively uses whatever best tells the story at hand, whether that’s graphics, photos or maps. The design of the pages avoids clutter. Clear hierarchy organizes the material. Spot and process color are used to good advantage.

Silver: Crain’s Detroit Business; David Kordalski and Beth Jachman

This publication uses a lot of illustration, with imagery that is conceptual and works with the stories. Pages include a lot of elements, but things are well organized visually via hierarchy created by type size and photos or illustrations. The infrastructure—lists, people, etc.—are also designed with care.

Gold: Crain’s Chicago Business; Thomas J Linden, Karen Freese, Jason McGregor

Cover designs show great variety. The “In withdrawal” and “40 under 40” covers particularly stand out. And the design is often innovative. The 40 under 40 portraits are fresh with a great variety in the images. The stories about addicted babies use effective documentary photography. There is a great variation through the publication, but all within the confines of a single unified look.

7. Best Use of Photography/Illustrations

Bronze: D CEO Magazine; Hamilton Hedrick

This publication produces masterful portraits, with beautiful light and telling poses. The full-bleed presentations are bold and impactful, and the “Ticker” and “Persona” pages are standouts. The entry also stands out for several tightly edited photo packages.

Silver: Crain’s Chicago Business; Thomas J. Linden, Karen Freese, Jason McGregor, Manuel Martinez, Stephen J. Serio, John R. Boehm

This diverse portfolio includes a wide array of work. “40 Under 40” is an exquisite collection of sophisticated portraits, while the “20 In Their 20s” portraits have a cool flair and show tremendous teamwork and coordination. The “Path to Recovery” article stands out for its use of compelling documentary photographs. Successful graphics and illustrations round out the portfolio.

Gold: Hawaii Business; Janelle Kalawe-Ching, Kelsey Ige, Lilian Cheng, Amy Ngo

This entry is packed with surprises. Projecting old, black-and-white photographs onto the next generation of family business owners is a creative way to include multiple generations in one photograph. The split screen portraits in “Two Jobs” are sure to capture attention and are a clever visualization of the story’s central focus. The climate change cover illustration is full of fun details, while “Alohatown” uses an array of graphics to tell the story. The staff’s ability to work with a range of storytelling visuals is impressive.

ONLINE CATEGORIES

8. Best use of multimedia

Bronze: *Des Moines Business Record*; “Greater”; Chris Conetzkey, Lindsey Darland, Joe Crimmings

The use of crowdsourcing is an innovative way to involve influential business leaders and loyal readers in commemoration of 35 years of the publication.

Silver: *Indianapolis Business Journal*; “IBJ Podcast”; Mason King

This weekly podcast brings stories to life, delivering them to the audience in an alternative format that’s accessible and portable. The report includes notable local newsmakers and celebrities, who help bring perspective to these nuanced discussions. By publishing these podcasts to iTunes in addition to the IBJ website, the staff is able to reach a new audience each week, one that might not otherwise be in search of business news.

Gold: *Crain’s Chicago Business*; “Chicago’s Opioid Crisis Series”; Jason McGregor, Kristin Schorsch, Manuel Martinez

This series takes a multi-faceted story and puts a human face on each aspect — on the addiction, the recovery, the regulation, the opportunities for profit within the recovery industry, etc. The execution masterfully uses photos, text and graphics to tell the story in a compelling way, as standalone stories or together in the series.

9. Best daily email

Bronze: *Journal of Business*; “Morning Edition”; Linn Parish

This newsletter does a great job of making sure its readers engage with the reporters by offering a roundup of reporters’ picks for stories. Datelines are a nice touch to tell people where stories are coming from in the large area this publication covers.

Silver: *Des Moines Business Record*; “Business Record Daily”; Chris Conetzkey, Perry Beeman, Sara Brown, Joe Crimmings and Kurt Heland

There is great conversational content. This entry is also notable for offering both a morning and an afternoon edition, with content changing to reflect what’s happened throughout the business day. It includes a great mix of summary/newsletter-type items and links from around the state and world.

Gold: *Business North Carolina*; “Daily Digest”; Taylor Wanbaugh, David Mildenberg, Cathy Martin & Ben Kinney

This is an outstanding newsletter that recognizes the intimate nature of inbox access. It’s written as though it’s coming from a friend, someone the reader is welcoming into his or her space. An extremely strong sense of place and a thoughtful response to reader feedback pushed this into first place.

10. Best specialty e-newsletter

Bronze: *Crain's Detroit Business*; "Crain's Real Estate Report"; Kirk Pinho, Beth Reeber Valone

This real estate report distinguishes itself by looking not just at big developments or redevelopments, but also by shining a light into parts of the metro area that are often neglected. A strong sense of place comes through in the writing.

Silver: *Des Moines Business Record*, "Innovation Iowa Weekly"; Kate Hayden, Chris Conetzkey, Kurt Heland

Starts with a byline and a story summary that has local relevance and an explanation of importance and impact. Then gets into other stories of local interest, features exclusive subscriber content to create added value for those who pay for content. Writing is clean, clear, accessible.

Gold: *Indianapolis Business Journal*, "The Rundown"; Lindsey Erdody

This newsletter is written in a way that's conversational and personal. It tells readers a story, explains why it matters, makes them feel engaged, and then does an excellent job of pointing them to other relevant stories on the beat.

JOURNALISM CATEGORIES

11. Best scoop

SMALL

No awards.

MEDIUM

Silver: *Hartford Business Journal*; "Aer Lingus Taps \$4.5M State Subsidy After Direct Flights Miss Revenue Target"; Matt Pilon

Outstanding enterprise reporting that started with an "I wonder what happened?" and ended with a records request that uncovered a waste of taxpayer money. Airlines are known for seeking revenue guarantees. It's relatively uncommon, though, for governments to be the ones paying up. This reporting revealed how poorly the state of Connecticut estimated market demand for direct air travel to Ireland.

Gold: *Arkansas Business*; "Clean Line Appears Doomed In State"; Kyle Massey

More than a month before the competition, this reporting revealed that a wind power transmission project was not going to be built after all. The project's failure had tremendous economic implications for the state of Arkansas – which lost out on a \$600 million project expected to generate hundreds of jobs – and across the south-central U.S. corridor.

LARGE

Silver: *Indianapolis Business Journal*; "Hospital Complex Costing \$1B Planned for 96th and Spring Mill"; John Russell, Lindsey Erdody

A Saturday night tip led to old-school shoe-leather reporting no one else in the market could beat in a Monday morning bombshell that one of the state's largest hospital companies was seeking to buy land in one of the region's wealthiest suburbs to put up a billion-dollar medical center. The Indianapolis Business Journal's reporting offered such depth and detail it took competitors nearly 10 days to follow up thanks to a fresh news peg from the city's mayor.

Gold: *Crain's Detroit Business*; "Ford Pursues Deal to Buy, Redevelop Michigan Central Station"; Kirk Pinho, Chad Livengood

The slow rebirth of the Detroit economy got a shot in the arm with news of Ford's deal to buy and redevelop the Michigan Central Station, an abandoned landmark that had become symbolic of the city's decline. Quick collaboration and pressing of sources enable the team to beat competitors by more than an hour on this breaking story.

12. Best feature

SMALL

Silver: *Vermont Business Magazine*; "The Treehouse: You Haven't Seen Everything Yet"; Maia Segura

A surprising story exploring a corner of the hospitality industry—treehouses. The piece presents a clear, in-depth look at this niche business sector and keeps its focus on the vital people at the center of the story.

Gold: *Corridor Business Journal*; "Working for a Living"; Katharine Carlon, Adam Moore

This three-part series about minimum wage succeeds in examining an often-covered topic from different perspectives and melds personal experiences with insightful data. The result is a package that's compelling and complete with real people involved shining through.

MEDIUM

Silver: *BizTimes Milwaukee*; "Survivorship is the Goal"; Lauren Anderson

Following the journey of one cancer patient is the thread that holds this story together as it deftly explores life-saving medical technologies and the research investment that makes them possible. Well-told and thoroughly reported, the story never loses its heart.

Gold: *Worcester Business Journal*; "How the PawSox Came to Worcester";

Zachary Comeau

This package pulled together a complete picture of how a minor league team landed in town. Solid reporting and compelling writing fuel this behind-the-scenes tale while sidebars and graphics bolster the story and provide context.

LARGE

Silver: *Crain's New York Business*; "A Developer's Project Becomes His Downfall"; Dan Geiger, Brendan O'Connor

This gripping story takes readers along for the ride in its examination of the rise and fall of a prominent businessman. Exhaustive reporting uncovers the story in all its pathos and detail.

Gold: *Crain's Chicago Business*; "Woman Up"; Crain's Chicago Business staff

Varied story forms, deep reporting and bold presentation choices are part of a winning collection that feels both complete and vital. The profile selection accurately reflects the diversity of Chicago, resulting in a package full of authenticity.

13. Best personality profile

SMALL

Silver: *The Business Journal*; “How Terance Frazier rose to the top of Fresno’s real estate scene”; Edward Smith

A simple clear narrative line drives this story of a young boy who taught himself about liens, survived homelessness and eventually became a real estate developer with a dream of revitalizing downtown Fresno.

Gold: *dbusiness*; “Change Agent”; Paul Eisenstein

This profile artfully weaves the story of GM as it aims to become the automotive counterpoint to Silicon Valley and the story of an autoworker’s daughter—Mary Barra—whose engineering skills and people-skills catapulted her to break ceilings and become CEO.

MEDIUM

Silver: *Columbus CEO*; “All in”; Dave Ghose

A bold lede captures the spirit of a company and its CEO aiming to become a billion-dollar tech company. The start-up firm called Cross-Chx initially was designed to help health care businesses manage their records, thwart identity theft and analyze data. But the profile interweaves a narrative of Columbus’ transformation with Cross-Chx and tells how its CEO pivoted to create a software bot that uses artificial intelligence to perform routine administrative health care tasks.

Gold: *Rochester Business Journal*; “With a Song in His Heart”; Kevin Oklobzija

An adman hears melodies in his head and then he composes songs that epitomize the aural personality of HBO. Specific telling details form the bones of this profile of a creative genius who became the chairman and chief creative director of his ad agency.

LARGE

Silver: *D CEO*; “The ‘Crazy’ Crusade of Steven Lawrence”; Tom Stephenson

Compelling and narratively strong, this profile gives excellent legal explanations about how a company that makes highway guardrails became the obsession of a product liability lawyer. As a central character, lawyer Steven Lawrence, makes for a great crusader riding in his pickup truck across the plains of Texas and beyond.

Gold: *Florida Trend*; “Philosopher President”; Jason Garcia

Richly reported and elegantly written, this profile wonderfully captures the personality of a nationally-lauded college president who is a mensch, a musical wizard and an intellectual who advocates that anyone can learn anything if the conditions for learning are right.

14: Best body of work, single writer

SMALL

Silver: *GSA Business Report*; Ross Norton, reporter

Ross Norton knows how to turn a daily assignment – like a company profile – into a well-turned piece. He also brings his gift for word-smithing to longer features, such as on the textile industry or the boom in restaurants in Spartanburg.

Gold: *dbusiness*; Ronald Ahrens, reporter

Ronald Ahrens tackles the tough stories on a competitive beat – the auto industry. Stories on self-driving cars and Ford’s plans for research and development brim with information and are authoritative and deep. Through word choice and distinctive voice, he takes business writing to another level.

MEDIUM

Silver: *Twin Cities Business*; Burl Gilyard, reporter

Burl Gilyard applies flashes of creativity onto sturdy and well-constructed stories. Whether it’s a feature on the snack industry or an analysis of housing density, he produces consistent and easy-to-read stories.

Gold: *Business North Carolina*; Edward Martin, reporter

Great writing is built upon details –not just any details, but carefully chosen pieces that create a brilliant word picture. Edward Martin brings an elegant style to stories that do more than inform – they intrigue. This versatile selection included a profile of the NASCAR chief, analysis of a state health care change, an equine event, and an evangelical product pitchman.

LARGE

Silver: *Baton Rouge Business Report*; Stephanie Riegel, reporter

Unflattering civic stories aren’t easy to write – they require lots of deep sourcing and thorough fact checks. Stephanie Riegel shows her deep knowledge of the community in her deft handling of an analysis of why a civic organization is rubbing some the wrong way. Her writing also shines in an editorial, and in a data piece on property that’s under-assessed.

Gold: *Crain’s New York Business*; Aaron Elstein, reporter

Whether covering business scams or retail features, Aaron Elstein writes with authority. This selection of stories showcase a smooth, comfortable writing style and includes a records-heavy piece on “sewer service” collection tactics, a feature on authentic water for pizzas, and a feature on opera’s boom. Deep reporting and attention to detail underpins it all.

15. Best recurring feature

SMALL

Silver: *dbusiness*; “Closing Bell”; Ronald Ehrens

This feature is a breath of fresh air the end of the book. The content is relevant, explanatory and explained in an entertaining way. The ledes are appealing and the short format serves a tightly told story.

Gold: *Insight on Business*; “Reader Recommended”; Brian Rasmussen, MaryBeth Matzek, Jessica Thiel, Bryan Aschenbrenner

A brilliant idea: Find someone who’s recognizable but not necessarily a tastemaker and ask them what they like. It’s unique, it brings readers in and it engages with the community in a slightly less serious way than the rest of the publication. It also gives people a voice in the pages.

MEDIUM

Silver: *BizTimes Milwaukee*; “Rev up”; Molly Dill

What makes a second-stage startup different from a first? Less of a reliance on hope. That’s what makes “Rev Up” so compelling: It’s not about a new company that has a great idea. It’s about a company that had a great idea and is making it work. The feature replaces the starry-eyed dream talk of first-stage startups with practical, interesting information from those who did, in fact, start up and get going.

Gold: *Biz New Orleans*; “Why didn’t I think of that?”; Ashley McLellan, Kim Singletary, Sarah George

This feature is based on a natural human reaction. It’s charming in its conception and endearing in its execution. The writing is light, the quotes sparkle and the photography is spot-on. The reporters have done a nice job of finding people doing things that look obvious but aren’t.

LARGE

Silver: *Florida Trend*; “Icon”; Art Levy

Interesting people and deeper questions make this entry stand out. The questions penetrate and the answers have good insight to them.

Gold: *D CEO*; “My Roots”; Shawn Shinneman, Jennifer Warren, Christine Perez

There are countless “mover-and-shaker” interview formats out there. This one is different. It’s a personal narrative, punctuated with personal photos. It gives the audience a sense not of who the person is, but of how they came to be. It’s a creative approach that elevates a traditional idea.

16. Best coverage of local breaking news

SMALL

Silver: No award.

Gold: *Vermont Business Magazine*; “Rural 911 service in jeopardy”; Timothy McQuiston, editor

Exemplary work wrestling with a story that continued to develop at press time. The reporter taps into sources and documents well to show how the 911 service was failing. In later stories, he showed how the state’s rural cell services struggled, too.

MEDIUM

Silver: *Virginia Business*; “Northern Virginia lands a big chunk of Amazon’s second corporate headquarters”; Paula C. Squires, managing editor

Amazon’s decision to locate part of its operations in the publication’s coverage area was big national news. For this local story, the writer provides an in-depth account of how aspects of the deal could impact real estate and the Washington, D.C.-area tech scene. The writer’s expertise shines through this coverage.

Gold: *Worcester Business Journal*; “Worcester and PawSox sign letter of intent to build \$90M stadium”; Zachary Comeau, staff writer, Grant Welker, news editor

This well-sourced and comprehensive package details a landmark deal to build a new sports stadium. The writers went beyond the basics of the deal and told how the plan might affect redevelopment in the area. Also, they reached out for input to critics of the deal.

LARGE

Silver: *Crain’s Detroit Business*; “Inside the Beaumont settlement: ‘Royal Family’ doctors, big paychecks, free offices”; Jay Greene, senior reporter

Written after a local hospital’s settlement with the U.S. Department of Justice, the stories take readers inside the allegations of medical claim wrongdoing. The reporter ably mines court documents for detail and attempts to track down all the doctors involved for comment.

Gold: *Indianapolis Business Journal*; “Endocyte’s \$2.1B deal with Novartis comes after years of setbacks”; John Russell, reporter

This story gives readers an incisive look at how a down-on-its-luck company profited after years of setbacks, thanks to a merger. The reporter details the ups and downs, relying on interviews with company insiders. A great lead and forceful writing grip the readers’ interest.

17. Best investigative reporting

SMALL

Silver: *New Hampshire Business Review*; “Hernia mesh litigation mounts”; Bob Sanders, reporter

More than 435 federal and state plaintiffs have filed litigation in New Hampshire against a medical company that makes mesh devices to repair hernias. The reporter combed through the lawsuits and interviewed a number of plaintiffs to put together a cautionary tale of alleged medical blunders and haphazard oversight, costly legal wrangling and devastating consequences.

Gold: *dbusiness*; “Medical Monopoly”; Norm Sinclair, reporter

A startling lead sets the tone for this investigation into Group Purchasing Organizations, a handful of brokers who supply hospitals with supplies and equipment. A metal screw used in reconstructive surgery can be found on eBay for \$1, but it could cost insurance companies as much as \$2,400. The story behind these GPOs is superbly told — as well as stunning, fascinating and appalling.

MEDIUM

Silver: *Hartford Business Journal*; “Knights of Columbus’ insurance business enmeshed in bitter contract dispute”; Greg Bordonaro, Chris Hoffman

A careful examination of court documents led the reporter into sacred territory when he found accusations of membership fraud in the Knights of Columbus organization. The article is

supplemented with data and insightful interviews, looking past the allegations to provide a wide-angle look at a protective institution.

Gold: *Worcester Business Journal*; “The Boardroom Gap”; Grant Welker, reporter

It took five months to document the striking lack of gender and pay equity in central Massachusetts, but the outcome is quite revealing. As an example, of 78 public-company executives, only six are women, and male executives make nearly three times the salary of female executives. This is the kind of smart, meticulous reporting that can shift a culture.

LARGE

Silver: *Indianapolis Business Journal*; “One City, Worlds Apart”; Hayleigh Colombo, reporter

This series is based on an artful concept — taking two zip codes within one neighborhood to show a chasm of economic disparities just blocks apart. The gap between the affluent and poor sectors is well-documented with extensive data, but the problem is dramatically portrayed through stories about those faced with few jobs, low pay and limited transportation. The human voices bring authenticity to the numbers that define the gap.

Gold: *Crain’s Chicago Business*; “Hard Knocks”; Steve Daniels, senior reporter

This powerful report looks at the duplicitous practice of recruiting well-meaning victims into selling high-priced energy contracts door to door, then leading them down a path toward indigence and homelessness. The story is effectively told from the viewpoint of a vulnerable couple who suffered at the hands of unscrupulous energy suppliers. Extensive interviews, rich details and dramatic storytelling make this a winner.

18. Best explanatory journalism

SMALL

Silver: *New Hampshire Business Review*; “The Other New Hampshire”; Michael Kitch

Why are some New Hampshire counties “property poor?” This story broke down that dense topic to explain the whys and the hows of the state’s economic disparity and its effect on property tax revenue. Readers come away with a true understanding of what’s at stake.

Gold: *dbusiness*; “Mobility Midway”; Ronald Ahrens

A new Ford campus of any sort has implications for the automotive industry, and when the location is in a former train station, it affects the real estate and civic sectors as well. This story did an incredible job explaining what Ford is doing and why it matters.

MEDIUM

Silver: *Providence Business News*; “How Much Debt Is Too Much for Rhode Island?”; Eli Sherman, Mark Murphy, Mike Mello, Matt Bower

The challenge of paying for school projects daunts many states. This story brings in context from other areas along with scads of data to answer the very real question posed in the headline. The reporting brings transparency to a complicated issue.

Gold: *Biz New Orleans*; “The Status of Women in Business in Louisiana: Are We Really That Bad?”; Kim Singletary, Rebecca Friedman, Sarah George

By melding statistics and survey information with interviews, this story collection puts a critical eye on the issue of gender diversity in business. It details where there's work to be done while also offering success stories, and in the process provides an informed and well-researched analysis.

LARGE

Silver: *Florida Trend*; "919 New Floridians Every Day"; Mike Vogel

In taking on the hot-button topic of immigration, this package thoroughly explores the issue with a combination of graphics and stories. Columns from industry insiders such as those in construction and agriculture offer perspective, while infographics efficiently communicate a lot of information.

Gold: *Crain's Chicago Business* "In Withdrawl: Treating the Babies of the Illinois Opioid Crisis"; Kristen Schorsch

Detailed reporting and compelling human stories make this piece a standout. It's obvious the reporter went to great lengths to find and share the details that matter — visiting hospitals and talking to mothers while also digging up the needed statistics. The piece is broken up nicely and successfully tells a complicated, wide-reaching story.

19. Best local coverage of a national business/economic story

SMALL

Silver: *dbusiness*; "Medical Monopoly"; Norm Sinclair, reporter

The story thoroughly pieces together the reasons why health care costs have skyrocketed in America. The very first anecdote tells how the price of a simple surgical screw rises from \$55 to over \$2,000. Excellent reporting and powerful story telling make this piece noteworthy.

Gold: *Vermont Business Magazine*; "Amtrak could cease rural passenger service"; C.B. Hall, reporter

Well-written and well-reported, this story reflects the power of good journalism. Quite possibly, Vermont would have lost its Amtrak service without the careful reporting that detected the threat to the state's train system. The journalist heard the initial details, reported them out and followed up. The result was so much public outrage that Amtrak canceled the plan.

MEDIUM

Silver: *Mainebiz*; "Workforce Development"; Peter Van Allen, Laurie Schreiber, William Hall, reporters

The well-reported story on the labor shortage in Maine contained excellent anecdotes and lots of specifics. Who would've thought truck drivers could be in short supply? Or the innovative way that Bar Harbor attracts physicians during the busy summer season? The stories reflect a deep knowledge of the state, give great context, and raise important questions.

Gold: *Providence Business News*; "Rising Waters"; Eli Sherman, Mark Murphy, Mike Mello, Matt Bower, reporters

Great data reporting provided a strong structure for a powerful set of stories that warn the community that Rhode Island is facing significant danger due to climate change. The increasing

number of ocean storms alone — combined with rising seas — mean that Providence home owners and businesses face a growing challenge. More than ringing a warning bell, the reporters have carefully laid out the details of what’s going to happen next.

LARGE

Silver: *Hawaii Business*; “Building for Climate Change”; Noelle Fujii, LiAnne Yu, reporters

A thoughtful, well-sourced and graphic-packed report that examines both the philosophical and ground-level challenges in adapting to climate change. Dividing climate adaptation into six key areas helped organize the story both for information and to motivate community action. The result is a readable package that is state-wide in scope and does far more than ring alarms.

Gold: *Indianapolis Business Journal*; “Amazon’s HQ2 competition”; Hayleigh Colombo, Anthony Schoettle, reporters

A thorough set of stories and graphics takes readers through the process of trying to attract Amazon to Indianapolis. The stories are well-sourced and raise important topics for Indianapolis to consider as it goes after future high-income, high-impact opportunities. While painful to lose Amazon, the IBJ series made sure the community learned critical lessons about everything from workforce makeup to rising competition.

20. Best auxiliary publication

SMALL

Silver: *Delaware Business Times*; “STUFF Made and Built in Delaware”; Robert Martinelli, Fay Steiger, Tina Irgang Leaderman, Charlie Tomlinson, Ruth Gilbert, Donna Hill, Chris Johnson and Alex Vuocolo

This publication strives not only to inform and entertain but also to be helpful. It offers great tips for those looking to land jobs in manufacturing, or at least considering the possibility. The sourcing in features and job profiles emphasizes diversity, and documentary-style photographs add depth to the reporting.

Gold: *Insight on Business*; “Insight on Technology”; Brian Rasmussen, MaryBeth Matzek, Jessica Thiel and Bryan Aschenbrenner.

This is a well-crafted publication with a very specific focus. Strong use of photography, illustrations and graphics, along with a diversity of sources and subjects, make this a pleasure to read.

MEDIUM

Silver: *BizTimes Milwaukee*; “STUFF Made and Built in Southeastern Wisconsin”; BizTimes staff

An excellent resource for residents of southeastern Wisconsin on the hunt for jobs. It offers sound advice for how to find a career that fits and employment that’s rewarding. There’s a good mix of short stories, longer features, quizzes and graphics that pace the reader.

Gold: *Arkansas Business*; “Greenhead”; Chris Bahn, Brent Birch, Todd Traub and Dean Wheeler

This is a beautiful publication about the tradition and business of duck hunting, from the opening portraits of unusual hunting dogs through the back of the book. There is wonderfully descriptive and informative writing. Good use of white space in the design helps features pop. The unique focus is relevant to readers in a state where duck hunting is a revered activity.

LARGE

Silver: *Indianapolis Business Journal*; “Innovation Issue”; IBJ staff

Want to know what blockchain technology really is and how to put it to work? Want to know more about industries’ revolutionary applications of virtual reality? Trying to understand cryptocurrency and its future? This publication does an excellent job of explaining those things. The feature stories are interesting, instructive and coupled with thoughtful graphics.

Gold: *Baton Rouge Business Report*; “2018 Real Estate Report”; Steve Sanoski, Annie Ourso Landry, Stephanie Riegel, JR Ball, Caitie Burkes and Holly Dutchmann

This annual report paints a thorough picture of the Baton Rouge real estate scene. Written with authority and designed with the reader in mind, it’s an amazingly detailed and helpful publication. Strong photography gives the magazine a handsome look. Tabular data is presented in formats that are inviting and easy to read.

21. Best bylined commentary

SMALL

Silver: No award.

Gold: *Columbia Regional Business Report*; “Just doing our jobs: When journalists become the story”; Melinda Waldrop

A heartfelt column following the death of journalist colleagues of *The Capital Gazette* in Annapolis, Maryland, reveals Melinda Waldrop’s skill as a columnist. The emotion in her work is intense but never takes over her clear and expressive writing. Her work reveals insights into tight-knit communities of journalists and highlights the new challenges and dangers of the current news landscapes that require grappling with such tragedy.

MEDIUM

Silver: *San Fernando Valley Business Journal*; “One More Thing”; Charles Crumpley

Charles Crumpley’s punchy commentary on issues facing local business folk offers a nuts-and-bolts breakdown. His writing about subjects such as housing or public transportation dissects the ways in which trends related to essential facts of life succeed or fail. His columns answer the important question of “why should we care?” and come from a distinct perspective.

Gold: *Twin Cities Business*; “Editor’s Note”; by Allison Kaplan

Allison Kaplan’s commentary deftly melds the personal with the social, as seen in “Of Cigars and Full Circles,” in which she explores her family’s connection to a local landmark. She describes her past family figures with rich detail and character. Her ability to start with the personal and seamlessly extrapolate to broader concerns is a characteristic trait that enriches her commentary with the feeling of story and sincere perspective. This personal filter allows larger issues to be better understood.

LARGE

Silver: *Crain's Detroit Business*; "Dustin Walsh Commentaries"; by Dustin Walsh

Specificity is key to Dustin Walsh's commentary. His deep-dive reports, such as the piece on tariffs and the importance of the "chicken tax" in the auto industry, elucidate complicated and thorny subjects with clear writing and historical context. Research backs up his bold perspective. This willingness to take a stand on topics critical to the business community, such as education and labor woes, makes him an essential voice.

Gold: *Baton Rouge Business Report*; commentaries by Stephanie Riegel

Stephanie Riegel's commentary is lively and pointed. It explores big picture local concerns with clarity and wit. She seamlessly includes important information and statistics without losing her well-established voice. She creatively describes problems and their causes while summing up the discourse around them, ensuring that her prose is insightful and a joy to read.

22. Best editorial

SMALL

No awards.

MEDIUM

Silver: *BizWest*; "Local governments should play hardball in Thornton water fight"; staff

Well-written and well-reasoned, this editorial reads with a gravity that respects a subject central to the region. It also comes out and states a clear opinion rather than just reciting facts.

Gold: *Hartford Business Journal*; "No relief for Hartford commercial taxpayers"; Greg Bordonaro

This piece clearly sets out the problems with a lot of facts and then reaches a strong, reasoned conclusion. There's no equivocation as it gets beyond bland arguments that might or might not matter.

LARGE

Silver: *Indianapolis Business Journal*; "Time for Hogsett to step up"; Lesley Weidenbener

This solid editorial includes facts, statements and bite. It uses the facts to give even an uninformed reader a basic understanding of a city council kerfuffle. Then the editorial calls it like it sees it and makes no bones about what the publication believes is the right solution.

Gold: *Crain's Detroit Business*; "MSU board members should pay price for massive failure"; Mary Kramer, Michael Lee

Plenty of outrage was expressed in the wake of Michigan State's athletic department scandal, but what makes this editorial stand out is how it takes the university's board to task for not acting responsibly. The writing includes strong language that leaves very little to ambiguity or interpretation as it also suggests a well-reasoned solution.

BEST OF SHOW CATEGORIES

23. Most improved publication

Winner: *Hartford Business Journal*; Greg Bordonaro, Matt Pilon, Gregory Seay, Joe Cooper, Sean Teehan, Chris Wallace

The redesign has taken a sturdy, dependable publication and made it into one that is livelier, more colorful and much easier to navigate. Covers are bold and simplified, giving the reader dynamic entry points with well-edited, appealing teasers. Inside, larger type size and brightly colored section labels helps organize the material and clearly direct readers through the content. Photos are stronger and used more strategically, as are graphics and sidebars. The writing seems sharper, headlines more focused and page design less cluttered and more elegant.

24. Best website

Bronze: *Providence Business News*; Mark Murphy, Chris Bergenheim, Mike Mello, Matt Bower, Mary MacDonald, Scott Blake, James Bessette

Everything that's on the page feels intentional. Key icons to denote subscriber-only content show readers the value of a subscription. The use of different headings and color blocks do a nice job of attracting the eye to featured sections, for example, health care updates, calendar and events.

Silver: *BizTimes Milwaukee*; BizTimes staff

Clean design helps the audience to take in a lot of solid content about the local and regional economy. Dropdown navigation – including a prominent place for Foxconn News — effectively enables readers find stories of specific interest to them and their industry.

Gold: *Crain's Chicago Business*; staff

Character-driven business stories include solid use of multimedia to inform and entertain. The use of video, interactive graphics, photos and audio enhance the online storytelling significantly. In addition to news, readers find typical features like 20 under 20, but the site also invests in telling other kinds of stories that matter in a way that is unique, such as coverage of the opioid crisis.

25. Best magazine

Bronze: *Florida Trend*; staff

From big stories that provide coverage for one of the nation's most dynamic states to little stories that focus tightly and locally, *Florida Trend* gives its readers remarkable complexity and depth. Charts, graphs and maps, along with savvy use of photographs tell stories about demographics, health care, transportation or political issues intertwined with business. Off-beat, quirky business stories spice up the magazine's consistently comprehensive coverage.

Silver: *D CEO*; Christine Perez, Brandon Call, Jeremiah Jensen, Will Maddox, Brian Smith, Glenn Hunter, Danielle Abril, Shawn Shinneman, Julia Bunch

Issue by issue, D CEO focuses on people and how their stories embody the business of Dallas. A key example can be found in the story “American Tales: How three once-undocumented immigrants became successful entrepreneurs.” Elegant illustrations, bold design, distinctive use of color and excellent portraiture characterize the magazine and its approach from the sleek covers and the table of contents to back of the book.

Gold: *Hawaii Business*; Cheryl Oncea, Steve Petranik, Janelle Kalawe-Ching, David Sur, Jeff Hawe, Noelle Fujii, Beverly Creamer, Kelsey Ige, Amy Ngo, Lilian Cheng

Hawaii Business offers its readers so much in so many ways: Beautiful, bold and colorful covers entice the reader. Stories are told not just through words but visually with distinctive, fun typefaces and design. Each story has its own compelling stamp. The editing reveals a strong sense that diversity matters. The result captures a world that’s not just about money and buildings but much more, where small businesses have stories worth telling as much as those of big businesses.

26A. Best newspaper: small tabloids

Bronze: *The Business Journal*; Gabriel Dillard

Each issue is packed with local stories, lists and easily digestible community content. Stories cover big companies as well as small community businesses and ventures, such as the standout stories on Grizzly Fest and the master leather craftsman. Photographs accompany most articles, and lists are designed for ease of viewing.

Silver: *Daily Herald Business Ledger*; Kim Mikus, Richard Klicki, Tim Broderick, Rick Kirby

Strong story choices, tremendous use of local content and excellent writing sets this publication apart. The staff finds great guest columnists with diverse voices. In particular, the “Empowered Women” cover story has a variety of voices from different perspectives. Cover art is interesting, and photos are used creatively.

Gold: *Greater Wilmington Business Journal*; Vicky Janowski, Cece Nunn, Christina Haley O’Neal, Johanna Cano, Suzi Drake

A variety of topics and types of articles keep readers engaged and moving through this publication. It is loaded with original content, such as the personal DACA story. The cover package on GenX and toxic water lawsuits is an example of the strong investigative journalism found throughout. Powerful ledes and solid reporting make this a pleasure to read.

26b. Best newspaper: medium tabloids

Bronze: *San Fernando Valley Business Journal*; Charles Crumpley, Joel Russell

Articles were interesting and personal – the reader can get a feel for who’s being interviewed, not just what they’re being interviewed about. Photos are used well. Lists are well designed and easy to read.

Silver: *Worcester Business Journal*; staff

Hard-hitting journalism that’s unafraid, the reporting has bite. This publication takes on subjects like an overhyped corporate rebirth and the paucity of female execs at local companies.

Diversity appears throughout, not just in photos but as sources. The design is excellent, from engaging covers that grab attention to the use of different type weights to help in navigation.

Gold: *BizTimes Milwaukee*; staff

The photography is solid. The design is clean and places attention on the content itself. Illustrations are used throughout very effectively. The overall architecture makes it easy to navigate through the entire publication. Front of the book sections include little nuggets for everyone. The cover stories are well reported and very people-focused.

26c. Best newspaper: large tabloids

Bronze: *Indianapolis Business Journal*; Greg Andrews, editor

This publication is consistently strong in all areas. The editors are not afraid to experiment with design and they make sure to break up each page in a consistent manner. There's a clear table of contents, sections are well labeled, and Page 3 is always pleasing. In addition to strong reporting, the story selection takes on challenging and controversial issues in the community.

Silver: *Crain's Chicago Business*; CCB staff

From cover to cover, there are surprises, strong news stories and well-done features. The "hard knocks" feature was different and well done. Food and drink is always a highlight. Even standard features, such as "20 in their 20s," showed a great effort at both diversity and storytelling. Covers are strong, photos are well played and the layout is inspiring.

Gold: *Crain's Detroit Business*; Michael Lee

Consistently strong, thorough cover stories are a hallmark of this publication. The reporting is solid, and so is the artwork and design. The piece on American Dreams was unexpected and surprising. A story on Detroit's bid for the Amazon HQ did a fantastic job of using email records to create a strong, behind-the-scenes narrative. And an explanatory piece about Ford was fascinating and had an impact on the community. Other material throughout each issue also is well done.