

- Does the voiceover compete with natural sound or music?
- Is music (if used) appropriate for the subject matter?
- Is the volume consistent?

### DM-05. PHOTO SLIDESHOW W/ AUDIO

This is an online presentation of a story told or issue covered with quality journalistic photos and an audio track. The piece should relate to another story or contain significant material to stand on its own. Audio track must include voiceover, interviews and/or natural sound. Submit a URL to the entry.

#### JUDGING CRITERIA

##### CONTENT:

- Is there original content?
- Is there a clear message or purpose?
- Is there a strong relationship between the slides and audio?
- Does the package stand on its own or add something relevant to a related story?
- Entry includes least five photos on related theme; pictures work together to tell the story
- Shots are varied and demonstrate appropriate use of wide, medium and closeup shots, portraits, action shots, detail shots, etc., to tell the story.
- Photos are arranged in a logical order, with attention given to a shot to set the scene and a closing shot to end the story.
- Effective cropping to center of interest
- Clear, sharp details
- Attracts, holds reader's attention

##### PRODUCTION / AUDIO QUALITY:

- Is audio clear?
- Does the voiceover compete with natural sound or music?
- Is music (if used) appropriate for the subject matter?
  - Is the volume consistent?

## SPECIAL COVERAGE (SC)

### SC-01. MULTIPLATFORM NEWS COVERAGE

A single topic, issue or event of significance is covered in a coordinated fashion on AT LEAST three different media platforms (including print newspaper, yearbook, video/broadcast program, social media and website). This category may be entered by a single staff equipped to publish on various platforms or by the staffs of different student media outlets at the same school, who partner to cover this story in depth across their platforms. Entrants should include a cover letter describing the story and how it was told

across platforms. Submit a PDF of the print page(s) and/or URLs to pages on online news site(s) showing parts of the entry.

## VIDEO JOURNALISM (VJ)

Entries in video journalism categories may have been broadcast via TV or the Web. Entries should be hosted on your student media website or a video hosting service such as YouTube, Vimeo, etc. Maximum entry length is five minutes, unless otherwise noted. Time requirements do not include name slates, countdowns, etc.

#### JUDGING CRITERIA FOR VIDEO JOURNALISM

Please use [MIPA's Video Best Practices Guidelines](#), in addition to the following, to help judge contest entries in this section:

##### WRITING

- Is the writing clear, concise and conversational? Does the reporter use active voice and present tense? Does the script complement the visuals?

##### AUDIO

- Is it clear? Is there any audio distortion? Was the appropriate mic used? Is the mic properly placed? Is there a "popping" sound from the reporter? Does the audio fit the action/pace of the video? Is the volume consistent?

##### VIDEO

- Is there obvious use of a tripod or is the video shaky? If no tripod was used, was it appropriate to shoot handheld? Is the color consistent? Have the shots been white-balanced? Are there different angles for a variety of shots? Are the shots framed well without cutting out important information? Do the shots have good lighting? Do shots "cross the line/axis"?

##### EDITING

- Is there an overuse of transitions? Does the piece have a good pace & flow? Are there any errors in continuity and/or screen direction? Are there any lagging lulls and/or jump cuts? Are any of your shots/scenes unnecessary?

##### GRAPHICS/CG (if any)

- Is the text a good size, good color, and within the safe title area? Does the text appear long enough for the audience to read? Does the graphic(s) have any

spelling/grammar errors? Are graphics/chromakeys clean?

**AUTOMATIC DISQUALIFICATIONS:**

- If the video does not meet the specific time requirement (such as the 30/60s rule for PSAs & Commercials) (not including any black/slides before or after the video itself).
- If the video does not meet the category description.
- If the video includes copyrighted music or graphics.

**Use of music or other content that is not created by student staff members:**

- If any music is included in an entry, indicate the title(s) of track(s) used and source of the music. Provide this information either in a name-slate/title card in a video entry or in the space provided on the entry form.
- If you are making a “fair use” claim on copyrighted materials, please cite your reasoning in the entry form.

**VJ-01. NEWS STORY/PACKAGE**

News stories should report on a single event/occurrence. They focus on the 5 Ws and factual information and give a balanced, unbiased overview. These stories may include interviews, voice-overs, dramatizations, graphics, b-roll and stand-ups. Lower thirds are important for identification. Sports-related news stories must be submitted in Sports News Story. Submit a URL to the entry.

**VJ-02. LOCALIZED NEWS ANALYSIS**

Stories should localize state or national topics and explore how they impact people in their community. Entries should concern subjects of a substantive and contemporary nature and go beyond the surface facts. The elements of “why” and “how” should be examined through research, but the reporter’s opinions should not be expressed. May include interviews, sound bites, voice-overs, dramatizations, graphics, b-roll and stand-ups. Lower thirds are important for identification. Submit a URL to the entry.

**VJ-03. INFORMATIVE FEATURE**

This is a single story that informs or instructs. It should go beyond surface-level facts; information should be obtained from research and interviews. It should capture the audience’s attention and arouse curiosity. The topic should be relevant to interests and/or welfare of school or students. These stories may include interviews, sound bites, voice-overs, dramatizations, graphics, b-roll and stand-ups. Lower thirds are important for identification. Sports-related

feature stories must be submitted into the Sports Feature Story category. Submit a URL to the entry.

**VJ-04. PERSONALITY PROFILE FEATURE**

These stories should capture the life, interests, experiences or accomplishments of a specific person. They should not be simply a biography, but have a focus on an important aspect of the person. These stories may include interviews, sound bites, voice-overs, dramatizations, graphics, b-roll and stand-ups. Lower thirds are important for identification. Submit a URL to the entry.

**VJ-05. HUMAN INTEREST FEATURE**

These stories are similar to a personality profile, but they’re focused on groups, issues, events or experiences rather than an individual person. They may appeal to emotions of the viewer with inspiration, motivation, pathos or humor. They may emphasize a new element or fresh angle. The stories should capture the viewer’s attention and arouse curiosity. These stories may include interviews, sound bites, voice-overs, dramatizations, graphics, b-roll and stand-ups. Lower thirds are important for identification. Sports-related feature stories must be submitted into the Sports Feature Story category. Submit a URL to the entry.

**VJ-06. SPORTS NEWS STORY/PACKAGE**

Similar to the “News Story/Package” category, but with a strong athletics component. For example, coverage of game(s) or a season summary, or coverage of important news in sports. Good interviews and sound bites are encouraged. The reporter should give the who, what, when, where, why and how. Lower thirds are important for identification. Submit a URL to the entry.

**VJ-07. SPORTS FEATURE STORY/PACKAGE**

This is a single story that should inform or instruct about athletics-related topic. For example, showing what it’s like to be a swimmer. Entries should go beyond the surface facts. They might include detailed background information. They may appeal to the emotions of the viewer with inspiration, motivation, pathos or humor. The angle is less immediate than hard news. Stories may be longer-form, and they may be less formally structured than a sports news package. Good interviews and sound bites are a must-have. Lower thirds are important for identification. Submit a URL to the entry.

**VJ-08. ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH OR SCIENCE**

This story will focus on an environmental, health or science topic. It can be a straight news story or an

investigative piece. Stories should report and not interpret. They focus on the 5 Ws and factual information. Give a balanced overview if the topic is controversial. These stories may include interviews, sound bites, voiceovers, dramatizations, graphics, b-roll and stand-ups. Lower thirds are important for identification. Submit a URL to the entry.

### VJ-09. DIVERSITY COVERAGE

This story tells about the lifestyles, challenges and potential of those from a diverse background. It will cover not just the plight of the subjects, but may also look at how subjects deal with their diverse backgrounds and how diverse backgrounds are dealt with by others. The term “diverse” is not limited to ethnicity and may focus on a wide range of subjects, depending on the reporter’s story angle. The topic should be relevant to the school/students. These stories may include interviews, sound bites, voiceovers, dramatizations, graphics, b-roll and stand-ups. Lower thirds are important for identification. Submit a URL to the entry.

## VIDEO PRODUCTION (VP)

Entries in video production categories may have been broadcast via TV or the Web. Entries should be hosted on your student media website or a video hosting service such as YouTube, Vimeo, etc. Maximum entry length is five minutes, unless otherwise noted. Time requirements do not include name slates, countdowns, etc.

### JUDGING CRITERIA FOR VIDEO PRODUCTION

Please use [MIPA’s Video Best Practices Guidelines](#), in addition to the following, to help judge contest entries in this section:

#### AUDIO

- Is it clear? Is there any audio distortion? Was the appropriate mic used? Is the mic properly placed? Is there a “popping” sound from the reporter? Does the audio fit the action/pace of the video? Is the volume consistent?

#### VIDEO

- Is there obvious use of a tripod or is the video shaky? If no tripod was used, was it appropriate to shoot handheld? Is the color consistent? Have the shots been white-balanced? Are there different angles for a variety of shots? Are the shots framed well without cutting out important information? Do the shots have good lighting? Do shots “cross the line/axis”?

#### EDITING

- Is there an overuse of transitions? Does the piece have a good pace & flow? Are there any errors in continuity and/or screen direction? Are there any lagging lulls and/or jump cuts? Are any of your shots/scenes unnecessary?

#### GRAPHICS/CG (if any)

- Is the text a good size, good color, and within the safe title area? Does the text appear long enough for the audience to read? Does the graphic(s) have any spelling/grammar errors? Are graphics/chromakeys clean?

#### AUTOMATIC DISQUALIFICATIONS:

- If the video does not meet the specific time requirement (such as the 30/60s rule for PSAs & Commercials) (not including any black/slates before or after the video itself).
- If the video does not meet the category description.
- If the video includes copyrighted music or graphics

#### Use of music or other content that is not created by student staff members:

- If any music is included in an entry, indicate the title(s) of track(s) used and source of the music. Provide this information either in a name-slate/title card in a video entry or in the space provided on the entry form.
- If you are making a “fair use” claim on copyrighted materials, please cite your reasoning in the entry form.

### VP-01. COMMERCIAL

Commercials should be exactly 30 seconds or 60 seconds, as required by television. Commercials should advertise products, businesses or events that are appropriate to students or their community. Commercials may also promote school clubs, events and money-making projects. (Don’t forget MIPA’s copyright policy applies to graphics in this category!)

### VP-02. PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Should be exactly 30 seconds or 60 seconds, as required by television. PSAs should give information about an upcoming event or shed light on an issue or situation which affects teens, the school or the community. It may not sell a product or service. It may not promote a fundraiser unless it is truly to promote a charity. The treatment of the topic must be appropriate for a school or community audience. **Health-related messages must be entered in the Health-Related Public Service Announcement category.** Submit a URL to the entry.

**VP-03. HEALTH-RELATED PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT**

Should be exactly 30 seconds or 60 seconds, as would be required by television. Entries in this specific category should focus on messages about health. Anti-drinking messages are included in this category. Do not show brand labels/names, and don't actually show anything being ingested. Scenes involving drinking games (e.g. beer pong) are not permitted. The treatment of the topic must be appropriate for a school or community audience. Submit a URL to the entry.

**VP-04. NON-ANIMATED OPENER**

A video sequence that is used to introduce a program or program segment. It should not include animations or motion graphics. **Time limit: 60-second maximum.** Submit a URL to the entry.

**VP-05. ANIMATED OPENER**

A video sequence that is used to introduce a program or program segment. It should primarily consist of **student-created** animation and/or original motion graphics. Do not submit entries that use an existing template within your software. **Time limit: 60-second maximum.** Submit a URL to the entry.

**VP-06. LIVE SPORTS OR EVENT COVERAGE**

This category evaluates a production of a live event, which includes live sports play-by-play. It focuses on the overall production quality and techniques. The coverage must be live or live-to-tape. The segment you choose should be the best five continuous minutes from a broadcast. It does NOT have to begin with the start of the game/event. Submit a URL to the entry.

**VP-07. SHORT FILM—FICTION**

This should be a creative project that tells a narrative or story. The film may be from an original script or treatment, or may be an adaptation from another literary genre, such as a poem or short story. If the film is adapted or derived from a copyrighted work, then a written release or permission to use is required. The entry should be no more than five minutes in length. You may enter a five-minute segment of a longer production. Submit a URL to the entry.

**VP-08. SHORT FILM—DOCUMENTARY**

This should be a non-fiction production, such as a travelogue, a factual historical project, or a non-fiction production on a community or social issue. The entry should be no more than five minutes in length. You may enter a five-minute segment of a longer production. Submit a URL to the entry.

**VP-09. MUSIC VIDEO**

Music videos must use original music or licensed music. You must submit a copy of the music release or a copy of the license with the entry. Music and visual content must be appropriate for a school or general community audience. Submit a URL to the entry.

**VP-10. HUMOR**

Entries in this category may be no longer than five minutes. Content must be appropriate for school or community audiences. Humor may be directed at human nature, political or entertainment figures, or situations. Satire is acceptable. The entry may not contain ridicule directed at an individual, private citizen or a particular group or segment of society. Entries in this category may be submitted in one other video production category. Submit a URL to the entry.

**VP-11. SCHOOL PROMO**

This is a promotional video highlighting a school. Think of it as a commercial (rather than a news/feature story) for a school, although the commercial time restraints do not apply. Promos of your school's video news program must be submitted in the Commercial category. Submit a URL to the entry.

**VIDEO TALENT/AIRCHECKS (VT)**

Entries in video talent/airchecks categories may have been broadcast via TV or the Web. Entries should be hosted on your student media website or a video hosting service such as YouTube, Vimeo, etc. Maximum entry length is five minutes, unless otherwise noted. Time requirements do not include name slates, countdowns, etc.

**JUDGING CRITERIA FOR VIDEO TALENT/AIRCHECKS**

Please use [MIPA's Video Best Practices Guidelines](#), in addition to the following, to help judge contest entries in this section:

*\*Judges should assume the clips you include are student's BEST.\**

- **WRITING:** Is the writing clear, concise and conversational? Does the reporter use active voice and present tense? Does the script complement the visuals?
- **RATE OF SPEECH:** Do you talk too fast/slow?
- **COMMUNICATION OF IDEAS:** Do we understand what you're talking about?

- **COMMUNICATION OF EMOTION:** Do you use voice fluctuation? Do you have emotion in your voice? Are you monotone?
- **MIC WEAKNESS:** Is your microphone too close or too far? Do we hear the sound of your paper script?
- **SINCERITY:** Do you come across as being genuine?
- **NATURALNESS:** Do we enjoy listening to you? Does it sound like you know what you're doing?
- **CREDIBILITY:** Does it sound like YOU know what you're talking about? Do you give credit to any sources that might be applicable?
- **PROFESSIONAL ATTIRE:** Are you dressed appropriately? Tuxedos and prom dresses aren't necessary, but t-shirts and jeans aren't appropriate either.
- **OVERALL IMPRESSION**

**AUTOMATIC DISQUALIFICATIONS:**

- If the video does not meet the specific time requirement (such as the 30/60s rule for PSAs & Commercials) (not including any black/slides before or after the video itself).
- If the video does not meet the category description.
- If the video includes copyrighted music or graphics.

**USE OF MUSIC OR OTHER CONTENT THAT IS NOT CREATED BY STUDENT STAFF MEMBERS:**

- If any music is included in an entry, indicate the title(s) of track(s) used and source of the music. Provide this information either in a name-slate/title card in a video entry or in the space provided on the entry form.
- If you are making a "fair use" claim on copyrighted materials, please cite your reasoning in the entry form.

**VT-01. NEWSCAST ANCHOR**

This category is for compiled airchecks of the work of an individual person. Entries should include at least two examples of the anchor's best work, but can include several selections from different newscasts. The compilation should focus on the traditional news anchor, not examples from a sports or feature segment within a newscast – those would go in the Studio Talent category instead. Attire and professionalism are factors in this category. Judges will assume that the airchecks included in the submission reflect the entrant's BEST work; think of this as a demo reel to become a traditional news anchor at a news station. **Materials included as part of this entry can be entered in other categories.** Submit a URL to the entry.

**VT-02. FIELD REPORTER**

This category is for compiled airchecks of the work of a single field reporter. Entries should include at least two examples of the reporter's best work, but can include several selections from different newscasts and different stories. No studio work should be included; this is a compilation of "field" work only. The entry can include stand-ups, look-lives, field interviews and live spot reports, as well as other field reports. This category does not include live sports announcers, but it can include reporter work from sports news (e.g. game highlights and interviews). Attire and professionalism are factors in this category. Judges will assume that the airchecks included in the submission reflect the entrant's BEST work; think of this as a demo reel to become a field reporter at a news station. **Materials included as part of this entry can be entered in other categories.** Submit a URL to the entry.

**VT-03. STUDIO TALENT**

This category is for compiled airchecks of the work of a single studio talent. Entries should include at least two examples of the entrant's best work, but can include several selections from different programs. Attire and professionalism are factors in this category. The entry should show the talent in several different programs and different types of roles (news programs, feature, announcements, sports, personality profiles, talk show host/panelist, etc.). The aircheck should include ONLY studio segments, such as special reporter, weather, sports segment or in-studio interviews. Traditional newscast anchor examples do not belong in this compilation! Judges will assume that the airchecks included in the submission reflect the entrant's BEST work; think of this as a demo reel to become an in-studio segment host/reporter at a news station. **Materials included as part of this entry can be entered in other categories.** Submit a URL to the entry.

**VT-04. LIVE SPORTS ANNOUNCER**

A compilation of a talent's best on-air work as play-by-play, color commentator or sideline reporter. The airchecks should be recorded at a live sports event in real time. The announcer does not have to always appear on-camera, and the entry may be limited to announcer speaking over video of game action. Attire is a factor in the judging. Judges will assume the airchecks represent only your best work; think of this as a demo reel to become a sports play-by-play or color commentator. **Materials included as part of this entry can be entered in other categories.** Submit a URL to the entry.