

BPPA Pictures of the Year 2025 College Contest

Please read the rules carefully!

Print this document as a helper page to complete your entry form!

Deadline

Entries must be submitted by 11:59 PM on Tuesday April 16, 2025.

Questions about entry submission status contact:

BPPA Contest Committee: contest@bppa.net

You can also refer to the [Troubleshooting](#) section at the end of this document.

Questions about rules contact:

BPPA Contest Committee: contest@bppa.net

Eligibility

All entries must have been taken by a student either currently enrolled in a college, university, or professional/certificate level photography program located in New England; or a resident of a New England State attending a college, university, or professional/certificate level program outside of New England.

Photographs must have been taken between 4/16/2024 thru 4/15/2025.

Entries do not have to have been published. Previously entered images/videos or portions thereof, are not eligible. Photographs manipulated electronically or otherwise to alter content are not allowed, and images deemed excessively manipulated beyond professional parameters will be disqualified. Multiple exposure photographs will not be permitted – all images must have been made in a single exposure.

Images may be entered in two photographic modes: color and black & white. For color images, the goal is to replicate what the human eye experiences. Routine image correction for color toning, white balance, and exposure is acceptable. Flagrantly de-saturated or over saturated images may be disqualified. Black & white images should display a full gray scale range from deep-shadow blacks to highlight whites.

Photos from mobile-device cameras are eligible. However, the use of software capture filters (Hipstamatic, CameraBag, Instagram) that artificially impose on the integrity of the scene with excessive tonal aberrations, textures, vignette, or other artistic abstractions may be disqualified.

Diptychs, triptychs are not eligible. Film edges will be allowed if the original photograph was shot on film (negative or transparency) or Polaroid and the border is the true nature of the medium.

Each entry may be entered in one category only, although individual still images from a picture story or video project may also be entered in a single category. Only one image per entry file is allowed. No titles, words or borders are allowed on images, except in the Video category.

The contest committee reserves the right to disqualify images deemed excessively manipulated beyond professional parameters, and to request original files or negatives of images that have placed in the contest to verify their authenticity.

Entry Fees

There is no entry fee for the College Contest.

Awards and Recognition

First, Second and Third place will be chosen for each category.

Judges can choose up to two Honorable Mentions per category.

If a category does not have 15 entries and 5 unique entrants, judges may award fewer places.

First place winners will receive an award certificate from the BPPA.

All winners will have their photos included in the annual BPPA catalog "The News Photographer" and will receive a copy of the catalog.

Winner of Best in Show, as chosen by the judges, will receive **an award to be determined at a later time.**

Winners will be announced on bppa.net following the judging.

Categories

- 01 News - Picture of an unscheduled or scheduled event.
- 02 Feature – A situation with strong human interest.
- 03 Sports Picture - Showing participation in a game or athletic event.
- 04 Portrait – A strong photograph of a person, famous or not.
- 05 Picture Story- A series of connected photographs that tell a story. No more than 12 images per story.
- 06 Video / Multimedia - A story (news, socio-economic, political, feature or sports) no longer than **four** minutes in duration told in video format. Can include video, stills and audio and may include archival, supplemental and supporting material (e.g. graphics). News value, writing, sound (audio), overall organization and clarity will be the guiding criteria for the judges.

Preparing your entries:

Recommended Software: Camera Bits have provided the BPPA with temporary use of their photo editing and captioning software, Photo Mechanic. Photo Mechanic is the industry standard for captioning and sending images. BPPA Members and *College Contest Entrants* may download the latest version of Photo Mechanic at this link:

Camera Bits Photo Mechanic Download page:

<http://www.camerabits.com/try-photo-mechanic-for-free/>

If you already use Photo Mechanic to caption your images, and you have the latest version, you can download the XMP Caption Template file for filling in your required fields. Fields that are blank are to remain blank, replace the text in the other fields with the appropriate information. If you are having trouble with Photo Mechanic, send an email to contest@bppa.net and we can help.

This template will also work with Adobe Photoshop for your captioning process if you prefer to use Photoshop.

Please keep in mind that the Category Field is no longer an option in newer versions of Photoshop.

The caption template will not work in Lightroom, but captioning can be completed in Lightroom.

Here is a brief [video](#) on the basics of captioning with Photo Mechanic software.

Download the XMP Caption Template here:

[Caption Template Link](#)

- Photographer's Code

Create your unique photographer's code, which will be used to identify your images. Every photographer must have a unique individual code made up of five letters, all lower case. Do not spell words or use initials, as hiding your name and university is part of this goal.

- Entry Sizing

Entries must be 300 dpi with the longest dimension 15 inches. Save and compress each file as an RGB JPEG File. Image orientation must read in normal viewing position, as images will not be rotated or flipped.

A photograph may be entered as a single image and as part of a picture story.

- File names for single picture entries

The filenames for entries are made up of the two-digit category number, photographer's code, and number of photos in that category. Use hyphens to separate the sections of the filename. All entries must end in .jpg (except in the Multimedia/Video category), and you must use leading zeros for the categories as well as for the number of photos entered.

Example: 02-abcde-07.jpg

“02” is the feature category, “abcde” is the photographer's code, and “07” makes this the seventh image entered in features by this photographer.

- File names for picture stories

For a picture story, file names will follow the same rules but add sequential letters for each story within that category and a number to indicate the image's sequence within the story.

Example: 05-abcde-A-02.jpg

“05” is the Picture Story category, “abcde” is the photographer's code, “A” is the first photo story entered by this photographer in this category, and “02” represents the second image in the story.

Each picture story must have a plain black image at the end of the story to serve as a separator during the judging process and does not count toward the 12 image maximum. This blank image must also follow the naming convention.

- Video / Multimedia – Video entries follow the same naming convention as the still image entries.

Example: 06-abcde-01.mov

Entries absolutely may NOT contain the name of the author(s) or the organization for which the piece was produced. Video / Multimedia entries must have a title and include a preview image. .MOV files are preferred and encouraged, though other formats will be accepted only if they will play as standalone files. If a format other than .mov is used, and the entry will not play in a standard viewing program such as Quicktime, the entry will not be judged. Use formats other than .mov at your own risk. URL links will not be accepted. While the visual elements of a Video/New Media entry must primarily be created by the photographer entering the project in the contest, please list on the entry form everyone who deserves credit for the entry. Video / Multimedia entries may be no longer than 4 minutes and, after compression, may not be more than 500 MB in file size. Keep in mind, longer does not mean better; editing counts.

Captions

Captions must be completed in file info on each entry, and must follow this form exactly.

- Caption Field: Please be concise and limit yourself to 35 words or less. Your name, organization or educational institution should **not** be included, as this info will be displayed on screen during the judging.
- Headline Field: Title of the photo
- Author/Photographer: Use your Photographer's code, not your name
- Category – Contest Category number (01-06)
- Source – Your mobile phone number, No Spaces, No Dashes, No Parentheses

All other fields should be empty.

Entry Forms

The entry forms for the contest can be filled out at the following link:

[BPPA College Pictures of the Year 2024 Entry Link](#)

It is drag and drop of your image and/or videos, no FTP software needed.

Judging

All entries will be judged on a large screen by three working photojournalists. Judging is not open. Judges will award first, second and third places. The contest committee reserves the right to re-categorize any entry, though images flagrantly entered in the wrong category may be disqualified. If a category does not have 15 entries and 5 unique entrants, judges may award fewer places.

BPPA Pictures of the Year 2024 Check List for Entry

- All Entries made between 4/16/2024 and 4/15/2025 (except where noted in rules)
- Please include a headshot: *FirstName_LastName.jpg*
- Recommended size of each entry is 300 dpi, 15 inches on the long dimension
- Use the unique code you created to follow the File Naming conventions:
category-photographer's code-image number in category.jpg
- Photo stories have a black, blank frame at the end.
- IPTC Fields are filled out correctly:
- Caption: Clear and precise. For story categories, include a story synopsis BEFORE the caption for the FIRST image.
- Headline: Title of Photo.
- Author/Photographer: Your Photographer's code. LETTERS ONLY
- Category: Contest Category number 01 - News,... etc.
- Source: Your mobile phone number.
- All other fields left blank.
- Video / Multimedia entries must have a title and include a preview image. Video / Multimedia may NOT include the creator or the creating organization's name anywhere in the entry. No longer than 4 minutes in duration and no larger than 500mb.
- Complete the online entry form.

TROUBLESHOOTING

- Links not working? Copy and paste them into your browser address bar.
- Lastly, do not panic. Send an email to contest@bppa.net if you continue to have problems, we are here to help you.