

Algonquin Times, Student Writers, Tops in Province

Ottawa, ON, April, 13: The Algonquin Times has won an unprecedented three first prizes in the Ontario Community Newspaper Association newspaper competitions, including first overall in the college/university general excellence class.

The awards were announced at the OCNA convention in Toronto this past Saturday, April 9. The Times scored higher than (in order of standing) Humber, Durham, Loyalist, Sheridan, University of Waterloo, Ryerson University and St. Clair to capture first place in the general excellence competitions. Entries consisted of two compulsory papers from different months in 2004, with judges scoring front page, community news, editorial and op ed, presentation, photography, ad content, ad design, local features, sports and production quality.

"The Times is professional enough to appeal to a student audience, as well as faculty and staff. Strong, diverse coverage includes events and issues, along with excellent photography," said judge Lois Tuffin of Algonquin's entry, who gave the paper the category-winning 722 points out of 825. Second-place Humber gathered 700 points.

Kanata Resident and graduating journalism-print student Lindsay Valente captured first place out of 13 entries in the 'Best Student Writing' category, impressing judges with her centre-spread story on Ottawa playwright and actor Pierre Brault which was published in Fall 2004. Her classmate, Kate Litva, placed third in the same category for her feature on the changing face of the town of Almonte.

The Times' online edition placed ahead of Humber and Loyalist to capture first in the University/College Online Edition premier awards category. "The site is easy to navigate and find information and I like the idea of back issues," said judge Abbas Homayed of the Times' site. "Nice work, informative, a 'need to know news' in a format that is user friendly and visually pleasing." The 2004 Times online editor and Nepean resident Mike Dynie attended the convention to accept that award, as did Valente, and her classmates Devon Babin, Chris Holfley, and Jenni Condon.

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First year journalism student and current Times editor Spencer Callaghan and Journalism program Coordinator Joe Banks also attended. This is the first time since 2000 the Times captured first place in the competition, though it annually has placed in the top three since then. It has never won first prize in each of the categories in which it had been nominated.

"This award not only reflects well on the program and the students, but on the college community in general, which is often very generous with our students in granting interviews and providing information," says Banks.

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