Society of American Business Editors and Writers Best in Business Winners

2012

**Complete list of winners and judge’s comments in SABEW’s 18th annual Best in Business Awards**

**DIVISION: DIGITAL**

**BREAKING NEWS**

**Digital: All sizes**

**CNNMoney**

Hostess

*Christopher Isidore, Parija Kavilanz, Annalyn Censky, James O’Toole*

CNNMoney gave browsers a steady agenda of stories on the demise of Twinkies maker Hostess Brands. Coverage, which began within minutes of the announcement, included articles on the tough job market for the 18,500 employees out of work. Video segments, Tweets and other reader comments along with articles about the hoarding of Hostess’s output, including Twinkies, rounded out the coverage.

**COMMENTARY**

**Digital: Less than 2.5 million unique monthly visits**

**ProPublica**

The Trade

*Jesse Eisinger*

Jesse Eisinger wins this award based on the variety of topics he covers and how interesting he makes them, every time. The quality of writing, depth of reporting and insight are simply superb.

**Digital: More than 2.5 million unique monthly visits**

**Huffington Post**

Banking and Financial Crisis

*Peter Goodman*

Peter Goodman’s columns are not just well reported and opinionated, they are also hard-hitting. One of his pieces – which dealt with the role played by a regulator whose federal agency oversaw Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac – helped fuel a call for that official’s ouster and influenced a national debate on housing policy. Goodman’s columns are consistent in taking up significant financial issues on behalf of his readers

**Huffington Post**

Social Media

*Bianca Bosker*

Themes ranged from the success of Pinterest and the Apple Maps debacle to privacy problems at Facebook. Bosker’s writing is intelligent, clear and witty. Her columns, which are noteworthy for their strong point of view, have a healthy balance of opinion and reportage. While all good columnists share these attributes, what makes Bosker’s columns stand out is her courage and willingness to use personal experiences – even embarrassing ones – to make larger, important points.

**EXPLANATORY**

**Digital: Less than 2.5 million unique monthly visits**

**ProPublica**

The Great American Foreclosure Crisis

*Paul Kiel*

Years from now, people will be reading this story to learn about the housing collapse of the late 2000s. ProPublica put a human face on that crisis with the detail of one woman’s experience while illuminating the broad scope of the problem through its definitive research.

**Digital: More than 2.5 million unique monthly visits**

**Huffington Post**

Foreclosure Crisis

*Peter Goodman, Benjamin Hallman*

This entry certainly evokes emotion by putting faces on working people who have been negatively affected by foreclosures. But the stories don’t deal with people in isolation. Instead, the reportage moves to a broader view of how certain realities could affect everyday taxpayers. This is an excellent package that drills down more deeply into the knotty issues bedeviling owners of “underwater” homes. The focus on one Long Island home that became the poster child of the crisis was insightful, and the feature on the mortgage arbitration process at a Bronx courthouse was powerful.

**CNET News**

The Life of an iPhone

*Jay Greene*

The involvement of Apple in less-than-desirable conditions in overseas factories is not a new topic. However, this package looks at the toll of producing and disposing iPhones from a variety of perspectives. This series follows the “life” of a ubiquitous product that affects the lives – often in horrible ways – of people worldwide. In particular, the angles related to mining, the environment, and pollution-related disease and death are compelling. In all the pieces, the writing has rich detail and lovely narrative; they are truly explanatory and interesting given the iPhone’s popularity. An enjoyable read.

**GlobalPost**

America the Gutted

*Thomas Mucha, Solana Pyne, David Case, Emily Lodish, Kyle Kim, Nicholas Dynan, GlobalPost Staff*

This package has everything that business computer-assisted reporting is: a great theme with tension and relevance to a broad readership, digital storytelling and data visualization. The scope of the story pivots around the middle-class dilemma in the U.S., then pans various global economies. This was an ambitious effort to tackle a big subject. The presentation of this story was excellent. Overall, the piece is provocative and well done.

**FEATURE**

**Digital: Less than 2.5 million unique monthly visits**

ProPublica

The Great American Foreclosure Crisis

*Paul Kiel*

In recounting the ordeal of a 58-year-old grandmother who lost her Florida home after a debilitating injury, Kiel makes a complicated national issue personal and shows how mortgage originators, servicers and government programs designed to help all failed. Congratulations for producing such a compelling and well-reported piece.

**Digital: More than 2.5 million unique monthly visits**

**GlobalPost**

Losing the Nile

*Erin Cunningham, Peter Gelling, Ben Solomon*

Superb writing, a strong video and an excellent slideshow, all neatly packaged with a graphic header, made this series a clear and classy stand-out. The choice of topic and angle also made this our top choice. We read so little about that part of the world, yet it is incredibly relevant to so much of politics and economics. This story was different from the usual coverage of the region and the presentation and writing allowed us to see the implications for the global economy. Water is the one thing none of us can do without. Stunning.

**Huffington Post**

Poverty

*Peter Goodman*

Wide ranging in scope and deeply reported, this series delivered a clear perspective on the other side of the economy, and those struggling to make it. The breadth was matched by the strength of the beautifully visual writing. A big and important story, masterfully told.

**Huffington Post**

Google X

*Bianca Bosker*

From the dramatic, hair-raising lead, the writing gripped and never let go. The video provided a fuller dimension, but it was the strength of the reporting and writing that brought the subject to life. We all know Google and we all have an idea that these people are different. This story showed us that these people don’t see the world the way the rest of us do. It’s not easy to pull off such a profile. This one succeeded.

**GENERAL EXCELLENCE**

**Digital: All sizes**

**CNET News**

*CNET News Staff*

CNET took us on a journey from California to Asia, shining a light on the makings of a public relations disaster at Netflix and the human face of iPhone production in China. We liked that CNET combines this great journalism with live blogging, industry commentary and product reviews. CNET takes full advantage of its digital platform to offer features that appeal to techies, the layperson seeking a recommendation on the latest tablet and anyone in search of a good tech read.

**PolitiFact**

Fact Checking Business in Campaign 2012

*Louis Jacobson, Becky Bowers, Molly Moorhead, Bill Adair, Angie Drobnic Holan*

In an election season shaped by the economy and Mitt Romney’s business background, Politifact stood out for its original work demystifying ads and political statements for the public. The site’s thorough pieces make you feel like you’re sleuthing right along with the reporter. Filings, interviews and assorted news sources give the site’s investigations authority. Politifact added more fresh reporting on these important political/business stories than many of the so-called traditional business sites this past year.

**INVESTIGATIVE**

**Digital: Less than 2.5 million unique monthly visits**

**ProPublica/Frontline**

Cell Tower Deaths

*Ryan Knutson, Liz Day, Travis Fox, Martin Smith,  Habiba Nosheen*

Impressive investigation of dozens of cell tower deaths, connecting the accidents to the lax supervision of the contractors, culture of the workers and the rush to get us all good mobile reception. Reporters overcame data difficulties by tracing deaths back to the telecommunications firms that originally paid for the work. Impact could prevent injuries and save lives. Compelling Frontline narrative.

**Center for Public Integrity**

Skin & Bone: The Shadowy Trade in Human Body Parts

*Kate Willson, Gerard Ryle, Mike Hudson, Kimberley Porteous, David Donald and Marina Walker Guevara, The International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (USA) Vlad Lavrov, The Kiev Post (Ukraine) Martina Keller, freelance (Germany) Thomas Maier, Newsday and News12 Long Island (USA) Sandra Bartlett, Joe Shapiro and Susanne Reber, National Public Radio (USA) Mar Cabra, freelance (Spain) William Venuti and Antonio Aldo Palaleo, The Daily Slovakia (Slovakia) and La Voce della Repubblica Ceca (Czech Rep.) Alexenia Dimitrova, 24 Chasa (Bulgaria) Nari Kim, Channel A (South Korea)*

Disturbing and ambitious work. Herculean examination of huge volume of U.S. and international records to unravel human tissue trade. Documents gaps in oversight and problems with record-keeping. Stories are well-detailed.

**Center for Public Integrity**

Fraud and Folly: The Untold Story of General Electric’s Subprime Debacle

*Michael Hudson, Scott Reckard*

Nicely documented case of another subprime lender that at best turned a blind eye to fraudulent loans. Largely depends on information from lawsuits and uses fair number of blind quotes. Although familiar, project is strong.

**Digital: More than 2.5 million unique monthly visits**

**GlobalPost**

Fault Line: Aid, Politics, and Blame in Post-Quake Haiti

*GlobalPost Staff*

In a year-long series of deeply reported articles, GlobalPost asked the tough question: Where did all the money for post-earthquake Haiti go? While well-meaning people around the world give money after a disaster, too often there is no journalistic follow-up as the world moves to the next disaster. Especially in Haiti, where there is so much uncertainty, no one was keeping notes. GlobalPost’s insistence on answers upholds the highest traditions of investigative journalism.

**DIVISION: INNOVATION**

**All Sizes**

**USA Today**

Ghost Factories

*USA Today Staff*

USA Today clearly felt the poisons lurking in America’s collapsing industrial infrastructure was a story worthy of its best innovative effort. Excellent design, deep reporting and a solid, yet understated, user-experience combine to offer this year’s definitive perspective of the dangers of industrial toxins. Judges were especially impressed by reporters trained to measure for industrial impurities on their own, bringing a new meaning to the term “investigative journalism.”

**The Financial Times**

The LIBOR Scandal

*FT Staff*

The Financial Times deserves recognition for breaking down a complex topic — LIBOR — into a simple interactive experience. Using nothing more than basic graphical tiles, easy-to-understand business concepts and a firm grasp of the topic, the FT made an opaque scandal clear to investors and the lay business reader alike. Not easy indeed.

**Pittsburgh Post-Gazette**

Pipeline

*Erich Schwartzel, Andrew McGill, Laura Olson, Mary Leonard*

The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette proves that innovation is not limited to major media market brands with big budgets. This mid-market news company wrapped the basics of exhaustive coverage, multimedia content and social interaction into a compelling microsite devoted to a critical local story: The effect of oil shale industry on this part of Pennsylvania. What was exciting here was how innovative the Gazette was with off-the-shelf tools. The use of 360 degree view-cams was particularly effective. This group deserves real credit for engineering a sum that was greater than its parts.

**DIVISION: INTERNATIONAL**

**COMMENTARY**

**The Wall Street Journal**

Heard on the Street: Energy

*Liam Denning*

Liam Denning’s columns for The Wall Street Journal (Heard on the Street: Energy) are clear and contextual. Denning shows a deep knowledge of his subject and a delightful writing style. Most importantly, Denning shines a light into the future and offers opinion that is both credible and actionable.

**EXPLANATORY**

**Bloomberg News**

Mother India Starves Her Children

*Mehul Srivastava, Andrew MacAskill, Adi Narayan*

The Bloomberg package describes in impressive detail the extent and effects of worsening hunger in India – including malnutrition deaths among India’s poorest citizens, particularly children — despite the country’s steady economic growth. By highlighting the reasons for this depressing trend – which include corruption and government incompetence – Bloomberg’s reports should help lend urgency to efforts to solve this most fundamental of societal problems.

**Reuters**

Corporate Taxation Series

*Tom Bergin*

Reuters’ series combines knowledgeable reporting on complex international tax law with accessible storytelling. The story lends keen insights into the legal behavior and tax avoidance maneuvering of companies that have helped build their brand around a socially responsible or “hipness” mantra.

**The Financial Times**

If Greece goes…

*FT Staff*

“If Greece Goes….” took on the task of predicting the fallout if Greece had exited the Eurozone – a difficult challenge under any circumstance, but especially so in the midst of a highly fluid situation. The FT cut through the back and forth of daily events to present a clear-headed analysis of the ultimate impact of an event that, perhaps because of its potentially severe economic consequences, didn’t materialize. The FT’s work is a comprehensive look at a story that many Americans saw only in short snippets and understood little about.

**FEATURE**

**GlobalPost**

Cuba Kapital

*Nick Miroff, Alex Leff*

This was the one award that all judges were unanimous about right out of the gate. The intelligent approach to explaining and analyzing Raul Castro’s economic reforms and how they are affecting ordinary Cubans stood out for its stellar reportage and broad appeal, which made for great reading.

**The Los Angeles Times**

On China

*David Pierson*

Whether writing about “trademark squatters,” (getting the infamous Kardashian sisters into the lede) or how the growing problem of myopia means big business in China, Pierson’s fresh, and — dare we say (for a feature category) concise approach — was written with a flair rarely seen in business reporting.

**Globe and Mail**

RIM’s Last Stand

*Iain Marlow*

RIM’s survival may, surprisingly, depend on keeping its number one presence in Africa. Iain Marlow’s trip to Nigeria showed us a developing world where BlackBerry is still king, a fact that hasn’t made headlines over here. Marlow’s interviews with executives, business owners and the young hipsters in Nigeria who either aspire to own, or wouldn’t trade, a BlackBerry, gave us a new perspective on a company that’s been written about a thousand times.

**INVESTIGATIVE**

**Bloomberg News**

Revolution to Riches

*Michael Forsythe, Shai Oster, Natasha Khan, Dune Lawrence, Ben Richardson, Bloomberg Staff*

Many news organizations tackled the story of how the extended family of China’s ruling elite has used its connections to amass huge wealth. But Bloomberg’s “Revolution to Riches” stood apart, humanizing the story and showing the impact on family relations. Bloomberg reporters doggedly tracked the ownership of businesses, real estate and stock of the relatives of top Chinese officials despite personal threats and the difficulty of cutting through a web of secrecy laden with fake names and offshore interests. “Revolution to Riches” caused overwhelming reaction in China when it was published, resulting in the government’s blocking of Bloomberg’s website, which remains inaccessible there today.

**The New York Times**

Wal-Mart Abroad

*David Barstow*

Most had taken for granted that Wal-Mart – the world’s largest retailer – would always dominate the markets it entered. It was The New York Times that shined a light on the business practices that enabled it to do so in Mexico. David Barstow traveled across Mexico digging through databases and filing cabinets to uncover a hidden corporate drama that involved Wal-Mart paying bribes in city after city to win approval to build stores. As a result of the Times’ stories, the Justice Department, the Securities and Exchange Commission and Mexican authorities are investigating.

**DIVISION: NEWS AGENCIES**

**BREAKING NEWS**

**Bloomberg News**

Supreme Court Healthcare Decision

*Greg Stohr, Erik Schatzker, Megan Hughes, Edward Adams*

Bloomberg set the standard for newswires with its coverage of the Supreme Court’s landmark healthcare ruling. It was not only correct, while other services very publicly bumbled along, it interpreted the ruling of a complex case essentially in real time. Impressive stuff by any standard.

**COMMENTARY**

**Bloomberg News**

Bloomberg View columns

*Susan Antilla*

Susan Antilla’s sharp-edged commentaries give no quarter to those who mistreat investors or to the meek regulators who let offenders off easy. Her writing is crisp and eviscerating — two powerful traits when it comes to sharing opinions. Antilla demonstrates a shrewd understanding of the financial industry and its unsteady interaction with the federal government.

**EXPLANATORY**

**Bloomberg News**

Indentured Students

*John Hechinger, Janet Lorin*

A fresh and vivid approach to an increasingly important topic. This series combined superb explanatory writing with in-depth reporting, vivid story-telling and compelling anecdotes.

**The Associated Press**

China’s Reach

*Rod McGuirk, Charles Hutzler, Joe McDonald, Youkyung Lee, Denis D. Gray, Elaine Kurtenbach, Sarah DiLorenzo, Nick Perry*

Original reporting of a familiar but significant global trend. The AP team’s quantitative analysis of China’s growing influence carried the stories beyond the usual anecdote-based features, and packed a powerful punch.

**Reuters**

Inside Chesapeake Energy

*Brian Grow, Anna Driver, Joshua Schneyer, Reuters staff*

Reuters led other journalistic outlets in the reporting of Chesapeake Energy’s problems and the downfall of the company’s storied founder and chief executive, Aubrey McClendon. This detailed, concise and colorful report lays out in detail how Chesapeake’s problems have affected McClendon’s personal finances, reporting that McClendon even had to sign over part of his wine collection to secure a loan. The explanatory material made this series come alive not only for business experts but also for general readers.

**FEATURE**

**Bloomberg News**

Son Who Hears Voices Finds Healthcare Fatally Dysfunctional

*Tom Moroney*

This is a riveting account of how the U.S. healthcare system failed to take care of a mentally ill patient, resulting in the death of an innocent person. In this compellingly written article, Moroney uses statistics and exhaustive (but never exhausting) reporting to illustrate a mental health system that is failing not only its patients, but also the innocent victims — whom we now know include school children in Newtown Conn.  First-class journalism.

**Associated Press**

Quirky Government Group

*Daniel Wagner*

Excellent journalism in the spirit of John McPhee. The writer casts light on the innerworkings of a government agency we’ve all heard of but know little about. While ambling through the bureau, he highlights intriguing facts and anecdotes that help us better understand a bit about what our government does. He also draws out controversies in a way that informs without alienating the reader. It’s a well-researched piece, and a fine read that never feels like homework.

**GENERAL EXCELLENCE**

**Reuters**

*Reuters Staff*

Reuters nailed it with a year’s worth of groundbreaking reporting. Few knew Chesapeake’s CEO Aubrey McClendon borrowed $1.1 billion against his company stake until Reuters’ excellent report, which sparked a shareholder revolt and led to his eventual resignation. Reuters also caught a red-faced Starbucks boasting of UK profits while claiming a loss to the taxman. And even as global banking giant HSBC claimed it had cleaned up its act, Reuters uncovered a trail of funds leading to terrorist organizations. Reuters’ interactive series “The Unequal State of America” led the way for new forms of data-rich storytelling.

**INVESTIGATIVE**

**Bloomberg News**

Indentured Students

*John Hechinger, Janet Lorin*

This package of stories identifies a serious social problem, explains how it developed—cancer-like—with the complicity of politicians and university officials, and shows how it has led to spending sprees at schools even as it has hobbled borrowers for life. It’s an extraordinary melding of data and insight, reflecting a keen understanding of economics and incentives. The work is humanized with heartbreaking case studies, especially those involving the debt-collection agencies gone amok.

**Bloomberg News**

The Inside Story of Insider Trading

*David Voreacos, Bryan Gruley, David Glovin, Greg Farrell*

This package goes into people’s bedrooms, as well as courtrooms, to tell its sorry tales. There’s remarkable drama, even involving suicide. There’s also a dash of celebrity, with the Playboy example. The package reflects insights about Wall Street, putting human faces on a phenomenon that remains all too common, despite its illegality. This package takes an abstraction and makes it tangible.

**DIVISION: PERSONAL FINANCE**

**The New York Times**

You For Sale

*Natasha Singer*

We know almost nothing about one of America’s fastest growing industries, yet it knows all kinds of things about us because it collects and analyzes the details about our personal finances and then sells this information to the highest bidders. Singer unpacked this obscure and unregulated industry — largely data brokers and data analytics firms — in a fascinating and ultimately unsettling series that shows how marketers have exploited new technology to enable companies to peer ever more deeply into our lifestyles so they can profit more by selling us their goods and services. Thanks in part to Singer’s work, Congress and the Federal Trade Commission have launched separate investigations into this industry.

**The Wall Street Journal**

The Intelligent Investor

*Jason Zweig*

Tightly written and probing work that plays a watchdog role in exposing conflicts and too-good-to-be-true schemes. Goes well beyond the ‘don’t put all your eggs in one basket’ approach that prevails in so many advice columns. Extra points for how he discovered that a money manager who publishes a newsletter co-owned by personal finance personality Suze Orman overstated the performance of a mutual fund he manages, a disclosure that eventually led the fund to apologize. Zweig knows how to speak truth to power.

**Money Magazine**

End of Life

*Lisa Gibbs, Ismat Mangla, Penelope Wang, Gary Weiss*

In a deeply reported and hard-hitting yet sensitively written series, this team showed how end-of-life medical bills and funeral and burial costs can significantly and unexpectedly worsen the emotional strains caused by the deaths of spouses and others close to us. One article documented the tactics some funeral homes and cemeteries use to persuade families to overspend. Another found that aggressive and costly end-stage medical treatments sometimes do little to respect the wishes of the dying. A third piece painted a moving portrait of a man dying of ALS and how he and his wife have been making the best of their remaining time together, managing his soaring healthcare expenses and planning for her financial security. The articles pointed readers to many ideas and sources for lowering our end-of-life financial burden.

**DIVISION: PRINT – DAILY NEWSPAPERS**

**BREAKING NEWS**

**Dailies: Less than 100,000**

**The Providence Journal**

Curt Schilling’s 38 Studios Declares Bankruptcy

*Mike Stanton, Paul Grimaldi, Lynn Arditi, Kate Bramson, Andy Smith*

This entry showed how a newspaper can use the Internet to comprehensively cover breaking news and complement the print paper. The reporting quickly digested and translated former baseball player Curt Schilling’s complex bankruptcy filing and covered important issues such as taxpayers’ liability, and it did so in language average readers could understand.

**Dailies: 100,000 to 200,000**

**The Kansas City Star**

Sprint

*Mark Davis, Scott Canon*

Comprehensive package that clearly explained Softbank’s deal and the implications for Sprint and its employees, the Kansas City area and the mobile industry. The elements complemented each other smartly and the writing was extremely readable and relevant

**The Charlotte Observer**

Big Crowds of Shareholders, Demonstrators Expected for BofA Meeting

*Kirsten Valle Pittman, Ely Portillo,  Andrew Dunn, Cleve R. Wootson Jr.*

The story painted a vivid portrait of a meeting that generated little news on its own, as the reporters acknowledged in print. Anyone who only saw the front page would understand the tension between Bank of America and its shareholders, and also between the bank and the larger community. The remainder of the story provided just enough detail to flesh out these themes.

**Dailies: 200,000 to 400,000**

**Star Tribune**

Best Buy’s Founder Exits over Scandal

*Thomas Lee, Jennifer Bjorhus, Patrick Kennedy, Janet Moore, David Phelps, Neal St. Anthony*

The country’s only remaining go-to, big-box store for consumer electronics, already flailing, is further weakened by a decision not to share embarrassing, but crucial, information by the man who helped make Best Buy what it became. The stories by the Star-Tribune staff give readers an inside look into the downfall of an empire they mainly know through the yellow-and-blue Sunday ads in their newspapers.

**Houston Chronicle**

British Petroleum Plea Deal

*Houston Chronicle Staff*

A comprehensive and human approach to covering a plea deal about the worst offshore oil spill in U.S. history that took the lives of 11 workers and immeasurably damaged the Gulf Coast environment and economy. The stories keep the focus on the loss of human life and the victims’ families, left behind to deal with the pain, just as much as the impact on the environment and BP’s negligence on many fronts. Loren Steffy’s column about the victims on A-1 kept that tragic human story front and center. Coverage about the plea deal was not just a recitation of it, but written in terms that any reader could understand.

**Dailies: More than 400,000**

**The Wall Street Journal**

Buying the Big Board

*Anupreeta Das, Jenny Strasburg, Jacob Bunge, E.S. Browning, Telis Demos, Sharon Terlep*

This was a great scoop by the Journal. From the beginning and day after day, the coverage was solid and richly explanatory. The color analytical piece was an excellent complement to the breaking news.

**COMMENTARY**

**Dailies: Less than 100,000**

**American Banker**

*Barbara Rehm*

Barbara Rehm’s clear and compelling columns take on her publication’s core banker readership with well-buttressed arguments some of them may not want to read. Rehm tells bankers to split their businesses into smaller pieces, show gratitude for government bailouts and burnish their images by expanding lending. Rehm demonstrates the best qualities of effective columnists: She is comprehensive and prescriptive, but not ponderous.

**Dailies: 100,000 to 200,000**

**Detroit News**

*Daniel Howes*

These columns are thoroughly reported and rich in telling detail, giving them an authoritative tone that makes Howes’ passion for his topics all the more impressive. “He really cares, and you can tell,” said one of the judges. The writing is concise, well-structured and elegant while remaining broadly accessible and relevant.

**St. Louis Post-Dispatch**

*David Nicklaus*

These columns are admirably fair in tone. The depth of the reporting and the complexity of the topics don’t interfere with the ease and clarity of the writing. All the judges were impressed by the remarkable range of topics Nicklaus covered and the sober, credible voice of his commentary. “His breadth is amazing,” said one of the judges.

**Dailies: 200,000 to 400,000**

**Financial Times**

*John Gapper*

John Gapper demonstrated an impressive ability to cut the powerbrokers of global business down to size. He offers readers timely insight, well-argued. His views are geared to elicit a reaction and spark debate, and his illuminating, original columns consistently hit the mark.

**Houston Chronicle**

*Loren Steffy*

Every city needs a Loren Steffy, whose work illustrates the importance of a watchdog that officials and CEOs fear and local residents and investors cheer. His column about property appraisals of prominent Houston office buildings showed how a legal loophole was costing residents billions of dollars in lost taxes. He rebutted one company’s claim that the Obama administration was to blame for its bankruptcy. And he took the government to task for not protecting energy workers in the Gulf of Mexico. In each, he showed deep, original reporting and sprightly writing. And more importantly, in the grand tradition of local columnists, he has the backs of the people in Houston.

**Dailies: More than 400,000**

**The New York Times**

*James Stewart*

Exemplary because of the scope of coverage, lucid writing and original reporting. The personal tax rate column was engaging. The Apple column was prescient. The SEC column was both great explanatory journalism and news breaking in terms of why the case was dropped. And the Replacement Limited column was inspirational.

**EXPLANATORY**

**Dailies: Less than 100,000**

**St. Cloud (Minn.) Times**

Chasing Futures in the Oil Patch

*Kevin Allenspach*

The paper was able to show readers a direct relationship from the boom in North Dakota to St. Cloud’s economy. The package showed an extraordinary investment of time, thought and space by the paper to the story, although St. Cloud has limited resources.

**American Banker**

Payment Protection Controversy

*Victoria Finkle, Jeff Horwitz*

The story was one of the best explanations that the judges had seen of this topic, clearly written in an economical way.

**Dailies: 100,000 to 200,000**

**St. Louis Post-Dispatch**

Care Quandary

*Jim Doyle*

This story personalized the financial and ethical dynamics of healthcare costs, mixing national statistics with the personal stories of Athlee William’s family. We appreciated the excellent summary of the costs associated with Williams’ last six months of life and the extensive use of family members’ voices to describe the drama associated with her last month.  A great example of using a personal story to illustrate a national dilemma.

**The Atlanta Journal-Constitution**

Port Wars

*Dan Chapman, Matt Kempner, Brant Sanderlin, Melissa Angle*

East and Gulf coast ports are spending $15 billion in upgrades in anticipation of new business from the expanded Panama Canal. Chapman became skeptical. His reporting found no evidence that the U.S. ports would benefit. Plus, the AJC used great pictures and informative graphics to support the package. The package was detailed and incredibly informative, distilling a complex issue into easily understandable parts.

**The News Tribune (Tacoma, Wash.)**

Small Business vs. Big Oil

*John Gillie*

An epic David v Goliath story that helped reveal the behind the scenes workings of the retail gas industry. The reporter’s attention to detail helped explain the way the contracts work, the problems that bubble up over the course of the contracts, and the financial stakes for both parties. The outstanding reporting gives readers a clear view of the problems this dealer faces. It also places the problems in the larger context of national issues in the industry.

**Dailies: 200,000 to 400,000**

**Milwaukee Journal Sentinel**

Paper Cuts

*John Schmid, Mike Di Sisti, Emily Yount, Lou Saldivar, Nick Lujero*

A well-told story that got even more interesting as it moved from the lay of the land in Wisconsin to the state of the art in China. It’s a rare piece that we could explain with equal enthusiasm to colleagues around the office and a 15-year-old. Trees that grow to maturity in six years! Machines that crank out as much paper in a week as the entire state of Wisconsin in a year! And a lovely portrait of Wisconsin’s by-gone industry and its feisty modern-day champion

**The Oregonian**

Diminished Expectations

*Kelly House, Brent Hunsberger, Jeff Manning, Elliot Njus, Molly Young*

Outstanding, well-researched, well-written, well-edited five-part series explaining why so many Oregonian readers feel like the 2007 recession never ended. Solid use of graphics and data to back up anecdotal stories of the recession’s lingering impact on college students, recent grads, younger families and older households. There were a number of papers in this category that took on the fallout from the lingering recession but this entry stood out to the judges as the best executed and most vivid**.**

**The Seattle Times**

Amazon: Behind the Smile

*Amy Martinez, Kristi Heim, Hal Bernton, Susan Kelleher, Jim Brunner, Jim Simon*

This was an ambitious piece of journalism for anyone, but particularly for Amazon’s hometown newspaper. The judges collectively felt that they had heard bits and pieces of the Amazon story, but never all at once, or with such sweep. We were particularly struck by the shoe-leather reporting in the story about working conditions at the company’s distribution centers

**Dailies: More than 400,000**

**The New York Times**

Tax and Spending Myths

*Binyamin Appelbaum, Robert Gebeloff*

The Times produced reporting that was both comprehensive and comprehensible to expose the mythology and self-contradictions that surround American attitudes toward taxes and spending — the most persistent and perhaps the most important domestic issue facing the U.S. The series was engagingly written, a real feat for a story about tax policy, and was accompanied by an extensive multimedia package of video, charts and a standout interactive graphic.

**USA Today**

Green Inc.: Environmentalism for Profit

*Thomas Frank*

USA Today’s Thomas Frank demolished the green building movement, showing how builders received bragging rights and hundreds of millions of dollars in tax breaks for making small improvements of dubious environmental value. Frank detailed how builders dominated the standard-setting, and how the organization in charge of those rules made money from the green construction business. With convincing data and compelling writing, USA Today demonstrated that the movement was much more likely to benefit earnings than the environment.

**The New York Times**

The iEconomy

*Charles Duhigg, Keith Bradsher, David Barboza, David Segal, David Kocieniewski,*

*Bill Vlasic,* *Hiroko Tabuchi*

Marshaling its global resources, the Times explained how Apple has transformed manufacturing, retailing, employment and lifestyles in ways that sometimes belie the iconic brand’s shiny image. It revealed living and work conditions abroad that few Americans would tolerate, and the failure of the company’s success to translate into U.S. jobs and tax revenue or sustainable careers for overworked American sales associates. The ambitious series spanned multiple continents and was aided by memorable anecdotes, data analysis and multimedia packages.

**FEATURES**

**Dailies: Less than 100,000**

**Roanoke (Va.) Times**

Picking up the Pieces

*Beth Macy*

Powerful writing. This well-researched piece draws readers into the story from the start, with the scenario of the businessman trying to pinpoint the source of a cheap chest of drawers. We loved the family tree and the photos just made the sources come to life. Kudos to this paper for allowing such wonderful journalism to continue.

**The Providence Journal**

Full Steam Ahead Aboard a Fast-Attack Nuclear Sub

*Paul Edward Parker, Sandor Bodo*

This story was well of the beaten path – how often does a dispatch come from a submarine? We had fun reading this well researched package by enthusiastic journalists. (We’re dying to know what legal waivers had to be signed!) Three cheers to the editors who didn’t dismiss a unique pitch.

**Dailies: 100,000 to 200,000**

**Omaha World-Herald**

China Connection

*Paul Goodsell*

A strong series that explains to Omaha World-Herald readers how they supply China’s fast-growing economy, who makes the things they import, and why some Nebraska products (beef) don’t sell in this huge market. Crisply written with great photography.

**The Gazette (Montreal, Que.)**

Canadian mine in Andes

*Catherine Solyom*

A clear, concise examination of how a local employer affects, for better and worse, people and communities thousands of miles away. The resulting story could have been a wonky, overly earnest slog, but instead the writer delivered a package that’s fair, packed with detail, and careful to explain complex concepts.

**The Gazette (Montreal, Que.)**

Voicing concern

*Jeff Heinrich*

This is a fun, small story about a quirky local industry. I love the small observations: the differences between dubbing in France and Quebec, how the French demand dubbing over subtitles, and the process of making a foreign language come out of an actor’s lips .

**Dailies: 200,000 to 400,000**

**Star Tribune**

The Lost Empire

*Thomas Lee, David Shaffer, Paul McEnroe*

A comprehensive package detailing the history of an important local business that also did a fine job of explaining how the founder is now back to possibly save the company from oblivion.

**The Boston Globe**

Victory Outreach

*Casey Ross*

An insightful investigative story that had strong feature elements and resulted in changes to state regulations to better protect workers. Story showed how large companies can improperly benefit from cheap labor provided by a ministry, illustrated with examples of real people.

**Dailies: More than 400,000**

**The New York Times**

McAfee

*David Segal*

A fantastic yarn, cleverly told. Informed readers probably had known something about John McAfee’s life on the lam by the time this story appeared, but David Segal did a wonderful job of framing the increasingly bizarre behavior of the onetime tech mogul, who actively worked to confuse police, journalists and the general public. The narrative moved you through the story at a good pace, which is tough to do in something long even on an interesting subject. It stayed focused, stayed sharp, stayed witty.

**GENERAL EXCELLENCE**

**Dailies: up to 200,000**

**The Des Moines Register**

*Christopher Doering, Donnelle Eller, Victor Epstein, Lynn Hicks, Patt Johnson, Dan Piller, Marco Santana*

The paper shined with an impressive mix of features, including page-one pieces on banks’ firing of low-level employees for minor offenses, wage stagnation and conflicts over biofuels. The Register had commanding coverage of both agriculture and technology. Its sections offered lively Biz Buzz and Tech Talk columns. Bold graphic storytelling and modern illustrations enhanced its reporting.

**The Arizona Daily Star (Tucson, Ariz.)**

*Norma Coile, Business Editor*

The paper demonstrated outsized ambitions for a staff of three reporters, mixing high-impact page-one projects with a smart tech column and shorter items to engage readers. The staff distinguished itself with an in-depth look at the impact of the Mexican economy on Arizona and an investigation of legal bills at a local community college.

**Dailies: 200,000 to 400,000**

**Milwaukee Journal Sentinel**

*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel Staff*

The centerpiece of this outstanding entry is the two-part series about the Wisconsin paper industry. Rather than limiting the effort to how competition was hurting the state’s largest business, the newspaper went to China to show what the biggest competitor was doing. Its online version of the story traced the evolution of changes in the paper industry from the launch of the iPad in January 2010 and the resulting impact on so many businesses. In the same issue, they also broke an investigative piece about how someone who had donated to the new governor’s recall campaign won a contract to manage a $1 million program, an apparent violation of the state’s pay-to-play rules.

**Star Tribune**

*Star Tribune Staff*

The paper owned the Best Buy story. The submissions showed blanket coverage of the turmoil at an important company in the state. Reporters interviewed a wide range of people — including former executives and analysts –to give readers a view of what went wrong at a once-high-flying company. The Sunday submission that featured stories on flood insurance, the recovering housing market and farmland investment gave an interesting perspective on the broader real-estate market.

**Dailies: More than 400,000**

**USA Today**

*USA TODAY Money Section*

USA Today combines its consistently strong consumer focus with powerful accountability reporting. Topics included dubious tax breaks for supposedly green buildings, dilatory response to auto recalls by rental companies, and the surging cost of water treatment and delivery.

**INVESTIGATIVE**

**Dailies: Less than 100,000**

**The Register-Guard (Eugene, Ore.)**

Highway 20

*Winston Ross*

This four-part series describes the human and financial costs of a stretch of a road crossing a mountain in Oregon, and the state’s botched attempt to repair it. Ross depicts a project beset by problems, and of the highest importance: Drivers regularly die on the narrow, twisting Highway 20, which offers few lanes for passing, and many miles for frustration to build up, encouraging drivers to make dangerous moves which often end fatally. Combing the human, political, and engineering aspects of a complicated story in a clear, readable way, Ross has built a terrific piece of public-interest journalism, which also happens to be a great read.

**American Banker**

Debt Collection Debacle

*Jeff Horwitz, Maria Aspan*

An eye-opening story about how two of the country’s biggest banks ran roughshod over customers, selling paid-off debts to collection agencies, churning out lawsuits that in many cases couldn’t be supported, and firing employees who raised objections. Debt-collection practices have long been fertile ground for investigative journalism, but here the subjects were not little-known under-the-radar debt collectors, but JPMorgan Chase and Bank of America. Horowitz and Aspan combined excellent document work with relentless, old-fashioned reporting.

**The Tennessean**

Assisted Living Abuses

*Walter Roche, Deborah Fisher*

An investigation into assisted-living centers in eight Tennessee counties found one-fifth had residents who needed more care than the centers could provide. The Tennessean’s investigation into the growing assisted-living industry found minimal state oversight, including no staff-to-resident ratios. Reporter Walter Roche uncovered resident-on-resident violence between dementia patients that resulted in death, and a retired Catholic priest with dementia who exhibited intrusive sexual behavior toward at least five female residents before being moved.

**Dailies: 100,000 to 200,000**

**The Columbus Dispatch**

Credit Scars

*Jill Riepenhoff, Mike Wagner*

This was the pinnacle of investigative journalism, a superb and comprehensive examination of a frightening problem: damage caused by inaccurate credit reports and the stubborn credit-scoring companies. The individual stories were heartbreaking. Congratulations to the Dispatch for inspiring legislators to move to correct these problems.

**The Charlotte Observer and The (Raleigh) News & Observer**

Prognosis: Profits

*Ames Alexander, Karen Garloch, Joseph Neff, David Raynor*

Another thorough effort that exposed the complicated mess healthcare has become in North Carolina. They captured the players, the problems and the greed of those involved.

**Dailies: 200,000 to 400,000**

**The Oregonian**

The PERS Problem

*Ted Sickinger, Joany Carlin*

One of the best explanations of a complex pension system, bolstered by numerous real-life examples and great analysis of data. The generous system and the continuing costs to taxpayers can now be understood by any Oregonian reader.

**The Boston Globe**

Victory Outreach

*Casey Ross*

A richly told tale of recovering addicts exploited by the ministry they turned to for help. Through dogged, street-level reporting, the Globe revealed how these men became the cheapest of labor sources, farmed out by their church to do back-breaking work at upscale hotels. The grimy details exposed weak worker protection laws and awakened regulators to the situation.

**Dailies: More than 400,000**

**The New York Times**

Wal-Mart Abroad

*David Barstow*

Barstow amassed devastating evidence about significant wrongdoing and crafted compelling narratives. The reconstruction of Wal-Mart’s internal dealings, including the role of senior executives, was gripping. Corruption in Mexico is a topic often described in general but seldom detailed with specifics. This project delivered.

**Chicago Tribune**

Playing With Fire

*Patricia Callahan, Sam Roe, Michael Hawthorne*

The Tribune’s series combined a worthy public-service aim, compelling reporting and gripping storytelling. The historical sweep, including the role of the tobacco industry in reshaping the debate about furniture fire safety, was especially revealing.

**CATEGORY: PRINT – MAGAZINES**

**COMMENTARY**

**Magazines: Less than 100,000**

**Seattle Business Magazine**

*Bill Virgin*

Great analysis and expressed point of view, strength in story/news writing and ability to connect with readers, Virgin’s work jumped off from a solid news hook. It was readable and appealing without falling into hokiness. Virgin tackled news topics pertinent to his audience and wove together stories with solid commentary and data, pushing readers to form their own point of view.

**Magazines: Over 100,001**

**Bloomberg Businessweek**

*Peter Coy*

Peter Coy’s writing is compelling, his opinions are well supported and his analysis is spot-on. The judges particularly liked the Bain Capital and Fiscal Cliff pieces because they looked at topics where there was a lot of noise and far-flung predictions and made sense of what to expect. This is high-level, smart writing that puts complex subjects into focus in a compelling way and offers well-reasoned solutions.

**EXPLANATORY**

**Magazines: Over 100,001**

**Fortune**

Megaupload

*Roger Parloff*

This story was a perfect fit for the category. Writer Roger Parloff, drawing on his legal background, offers a comprehensive and conversational look at a conflict between copyright and technology brought to the fore by the arrest of Kim Dotcom. He tackles the legal gray area of the Supreme Court Sony Betamax ruling and why it does not stand up in today’s world, especially with the growing phenomenon of “cyberlockers.”

**Bloomberg Markets**

The Scourge of the Superbugs

*Jason Gale, Adi Narayan*

“Superbugs” is a thorough and comprehensive explanation and analysis of a growing threat to our world. The story is well crafted, weaving anecdotes of horrific health situations with plain, easy to understand language detailing the medical side of story.

**SmartMoney Magazine**

The Attack of the 6.5-Point Typeface

*Missy Sullivan*

SmartMoney’s well-written and eye-opening exploration of fine-print disclosures is loaded with historical detail, colorful examples and “shocking” study results that show how little attention consumers pay before they sign. Graphic breakouts on categories from banking to travel offer interesting statistics and helpful consumer tips, and an online-only story adds some of the tricks of the fine-print trade.

**FEATURE**

**Magazines: Less than 100,000**

**National Underwriter Life & Health**

The Complete ELNY Saga: 21 Years of Mismanagement, Corruption, Broken Promises and Shattered Lives

*Bill Coffin, Warren Hersch, Elizabeth Festa, Mike Stanley, Shawn Moynihan, Corey Dahl, Nichole Morford*

This fantastic story combines great factual reporting of a complex industry with powerful personal stories of the real impact on people.

**Magazines: Over 100,001**

**Fortune**

ConMan

*Roger Parloff*

Most business stories don’t read like a movie plot. This one did. The way the reporter was able to navigate all of the court records and spin this into such a great read is a testament to his skill. This was a tough division this year, there were probably six stories that could have landed in the top two. Con Man was thoroughly researched and very well written. Narrative writing in its finest form.

**Bloomberg Markets**

Blowing the Whistle on Citi

*Bob Ivry*

This story took an issue that was not new and layered on all sorts of detail with real-person interviews. There’s been a lot written about the sausage factory that was mortgage finance, but very little of it had real people telling what they saw and did. Kudos to a piece with strong research and good storytelling.

**Inc. Magazine**

Turntable.fm

*Burt Helm, Dan Ferrara, Jane Berentson*

After finishing this piece, we wanted to read it again. It showed the balance between the creative side and the business side of a company. Hands down the best written of the magazine pieces. Took a seemingly routine event and made it must-read material. Story was structured well and engaging.

**GENERAL EXCELLENCE**

**Magazines: All sizes**

**Bloomberg Markets**

*Ronald Henkoff, Laura Colby, Siung Tjia*

A magazine that appeals to the market professional as well as the individual with a true global interest in business news. It has a nice mix of articles that give investing ideas, to those articles that dig more deeply behind the scenes of important topics – like the cover story of mortgage fraud and one Citigroup employee’s attempt to blow the whistle on questionable mortgage underwriting and packaging practices and the consequences she faced by having done so. The magazine tries to tell topical stories through the voice of people who are part of those stories as a way to give new and additional insight.

**The Real Deal**

*Stuart Elliott*

If you are involved in New York real estate, this publication seems to be the bible in our view. But it goes way beyond the typical stories of who bought what, or local trends or puff pieces on big players in the local industry. And thus, has an appeal beyond the Realtor. If you want to invest in real estate, you should read this magazine.

**INVESTIGATIVE**

**Magazines: Over 100,001**

**Bloomberg Markets**

Danger on Your Dinner Plate

*Stephanie Armour, John Lippert, Michael Smith*

Food-borne illnesses seem to be cropping up with sickening regularity. In “Danger on Your Dinner Plate,” Bloomberg Markets reports that each year 48 million Americans fall ill from unsafe food; 128,000 are hospitalized and 3,000 die. Reporters Stephanie Armour, John Lippert and Michael Smith investigated what is behind those numbers and discovered a largely privatized food safety system plagued by secrecy, conflicts of interests and sham inspections.

**Bloomberg Businessweek**

Tech’s Tragic Secret

*Cam Simpson, Tim Culpan, Dwi Sadmoko, Eko Listiyorini*

“Tech’s Tragic Secret” follows the trail from Indonesia’s deadly tin mines, where workers are frequently buried alive, to the leading names in electronics manufacturing like Apple, Sony and Panasonic. Writer Cam Simpson and photographer Kemal Jufri journeyed to the mud pits and lagoons where miners labor, bringing back vivid details of the hazards they face. Their story also uses a variety of well-crafted graphics to show how that tin finds its way into the TVs, laptops, tablets and smartphones and other devices that use solder.

**CATEGORY: PRINT – WEEKLIES / BIWEEKLIES**

**BREAKING NEWS**

**Crain’s Detroit Business**

Lawmakers Quick with Fix

*Daniel Duggan*

A high-quality piece of investigative journalism, where the reporter used his understanding and experience covering the industry to break a story with big implications. Revealing how a major state politician’s brother lobbied successfully to get a bill passed through the legislature in three weeks showed great reporting, use of multiple sources and deep understanding of the beat. Even more importantly, he was able to tell a story.

**The Business Review (Albany, N.Y.)**

Azalea

*Adam Sichko*

Strong perspective about the economic development climate for chips in the Albany area, as well as a decent collection of details about what the site would require.

**COMMENTARY**

**Baltimore Business Journal**

Rants and Raves

*Joanna Sullivan*

Sullivan’s columns are engaging, thoughtful and vividly written. She knows how to hook readers with a lede, and she reminds us that business is about people. She is empathetic when she can be and skeptical when she must be. She seems to have a firm handle on the literary ideal that telling the story of one person can sometimes tell the story of us all.

**Crain’s New York Business**

In The Markets

*Aaron Elstein, Glenn Coleman*

Elstein’s columns offer financial analysis with a touch of whimsy. Not just debt service and gross margins, but Umbrian olive oil and free-range fowl. His piece on specialty grocer Fairway was as strong a column as one can do on a particular business. He’s funny, entertaining, has a great eye for detail and can sometimes slice to the bone with a single quote. The line about how Fairway should be going bankrupt, not public is just precious.

**EXPLANATORY**

**Portland Business Journal**

Bank Blight

*Matthew Kish*

These simply, but powerfully, written stories explain a problem that was in plain sight in many places beset by high foreclosure rates: vacant houses. Backed up by solid public-records and shoe-leather reporting, the reporter clearly explains the complicated ownership pattern that makes cleaning up neighborhood eyesores so difficult. The effective use of multimedia in an interactive map and a slide show of vacant houses complements well the sad tale told by those affected.

**Phoenix Business Journal**

Behind a Bank Failure

*Jennifer A. Johnson*

This very well-reported entry makes good use of documents and human sources to explain the complicated aftermath of a local bank’s failure. The journalist uses this one bank’s unwinding to shed light on a critical topic: the quest by government officials to recapture funds paid out to keep depositors whole when banks fail. The reporting takes you in the room as the drama unfolds, turning a complex process into a page-turner. Strong data and facts combined with good color and context make for a compelling micro-level tale that explains a macro-level saga.

**Crain’s New York Business**

King Cab

*Jeremy Smerd, Glenn Coleman*

King Cab is a well-written, well-sourced, succinct story that explains the inner workings of the New York City cab industry, which is tightly controlled by five families. It is an excellent example of reporting on private companies, without benefit of an interview with the key player. It is packed full of information, yet makes judicious use of numbers and color to provide a fascinating look at an under-covered business operating in plain sight. It develops the angle of the tension between the “cabbie cabal” and Mayor Bloomberg to provide a timely portrayal of that conflict.

**FEATURE**

**Crain’s Chicago Business**

Sears — Where America Shopped

*Brigid Sweeney*

This well-written, sophisticated story is as much a narrative about the U.S. economy as it is a profile of its subject, Sears, Roebuck & Co. and the Sears Holding Corp. Reporter Brigid Sweeney was able to use color from the past to bring us up to the difficult present, and offered an explanation of why Sears (and perhaps by extension other great American corporations) may be facing an economic environment in which it cannot survive.

**Street & Smith’s SportsBusiness Journal**

The Agitator

*Tripp Mickle, Tom Stinson*

This portrait of how a controversial Olympic sports agent nabbed some of the best athletes in the world and sent them to London starts like this: “Evan Morganstein was drunk.” From that lede, Mickle builds his profile with broad sourcing, great anecdotes and strong writing to explain how this prickly, iconoclastic agent works – and why he’s been successful.

**Crain’s Chicago Business**

The Cost of Crime: The Story of Austin

*Lorene Yue, Steve Serio*

It’s one thing to report that a neighborhood has a lot of violent crime. It’s another to show readers what that means on a human level. And while profiles of families torn by violence are moving, powerful and important, Crain’s Chicago Business reporter Lorene Yue took a different approach, telling the story in the words and experiences of small business owners trying to eke out a living in a neighborhood so dangerous that the customers are afraid to visit. “When I first moved here three years ago, this office was generating three to four sales a month,” real estate broker Sidney Taylor told Yue. “Now it’s doing four to five sales a year.”

**GENERAL EXCELLENCE**

**Advertising Age**

*Advertising Age Staff*

A 2012 redesign elevated the look of the publication. Ad Age consistently presented terrific headlines, eye-grabbing graphics, and stories that answered all of the key questions. The judges especially loved the story about Tide managing a grand slam in a crowded market with its Pods, and a feature on Louisville marketing itself to eldercare companies.

**Crain’s Chicago Business**

*Crain’s Chicago Staff*

The first thing the judges noticed about Crain’s Chicago Business was its sharp content and snappy design. The publication makes nice use of graphics to support and tell stories. It also publishes several innovative standing features. A weekly ‘Business of Life’ page, which carries news about everything from dining and books to nonprofits, recognizes that executives have personal lives too. And the Info Junkie profile offers a fresh take on the tried and true executive Q & A.

**Boston Business Journal**

*Boston Business Journal Staff*

The Boston Business Journal owns coverage of biotechnology, one of its indigenous industries. But the publication also surprises and delights readers with a wide range of other types of coverage, including a story about an executive who survived lymphoma and went on to raise $1 million to endow a scholarship to train oncologists to provide the same type compassionate care this executive had received. The Boston Business Journal’s coverage is readable, fresh and memorable.

**INVESTIGATIVE**

**Northern Colorado Business Report**

Abound Solar

*Steve Lynn*

The “Abound Solar” package stood out for its FOIA of Dept. of Energy records that blew open the oft-reported cause cited by other media for Abound Solar’s
bankruptcy, competition from China, to show that defective products were really to blame. The accompanying and follow-up articles, on faulty installations to
unpaid taxes to new jobs found by company execs, provided additional details.

**Washington Business Journal**

Impossible Dreams

*Bryant Ruiz Switzky*

“Impossible Dreams” distinguished itself by the innovative use of public records, extensive interviews and insightful analysis. It reflected an impressive scope as it crunched SBA data and used strong anecdotes to reflect patterns in lending showing that African-Americans had not rebounded as much as other groups in receiving loans.

**Indianapolis Business Journal**

Land Bank Giveaway

*Cory Schouten*

The Indianapolis Business Journal’s Land Bank Giveaway detailed the bulk sale of 154 different properties sold to a non-profit in a practice no longer permitted by the city.

**DIVISION:  RADIO/TV**

**EXPLANATORY**

**CNBC**

Facebook Explainer

*Julia Boorstin, Andy Tarabocchia, Nick O’Connor, Andy Barsh, Eric Vuolle, Erin Barry, Rich Uliasz, Kelly Frisco, Evan Tyler, Ray Parisi*

Delivered a slick, smart and appealing look inside a popular phenomenon that not only has captured global clicks, but also big-time cash opportunities both for Facebook and powerful brands that have harnessed its mass appeal. Great job in real time, attractively produced.

**FEATURE**

**Southern California Public Radio**

KPCC: Movie Trailers

*Sanden Totten, Paul Glickman*

KPCC’s “Movie Trailers” took a fresh story idea and went deep. The judges were drawn into this series of stories just like a popcorn-eating moviegoer is drawn into a good movie trailer. The pieces were thorough, engaging and rich with multimedia extra extras like slide shows, audio clips and video.

**CNBC**

20 Under 20: Transforming Tomorrow

*Susan Krakower, Luke Bauer, Michael Davies, Andrew Fried, Stephanie Masarsky-Sloves, Greg Groggel, Sean Stuart, Lindsay Panell, Jeffrey Plunkett, Kelly Martin, Nicola Marsh, Adrienne Gits, Bill Sherman, Kenseth Thibideau, Rachel Garza, Danny O’Malley, Tim Groseclose, Steven Williams, Ravi Subramanian, Danny O’Malley, Matthew Akers, Todd Banhazl, Rachel Morrison, Brian Relph, Jeremy Saulnier, Jeff Bierman, Mark Eaton, Michael Epple, Ari Issler, Jason Joseffer, Clare Major, Noah Stout, Jonathan Bowerbank, Gabe Redder, Greg Miller, Glenn Abbey, John Osborne, Cedric Pilard, David Silberberg, Adrienne Wade, Darcel Walker, Erik Whitestone, Alexander Yaker, Michael Di Ricco, Matthew Tomko, Bryan Landis, Deric Ned, AJ Pyatak, Candace Nyoz, Big Machine Indelible, Luis Fernandez, Thomas Guyer, Scott Hanschew, Lisa Harding, Scott Martinez, Harrison Osborne, Andrew Parsons, Tyler Smith, Crawford Watson, David Webber*

A fascinating behind-the-scenes look at the selection process for PayPal co-founder Peter Thiel’s $100,000 fellowship program. We were drawn in by the teens and the artful way in which their characters were developed. By the end of this lengthy but riveting visual narrative, we found ourselves rooting for the amazing young people profiled. The narrative is interwoven with a central question: is college worthwhile? Beautifully produced and written.

**INVESTIGATIVE**

**CNBC**

Filthy Rich

*Scott Cohn, Catherine Corrigan, Jeff Pohlman, Steven T. Banton, Gary Princz, Vito Tattoli, Gina Saudino, Gerard Miller, David Grogan, Heinrich Walling, Raul Marin, Jack Rayzor, Jerrald Hattan, Brian Prentke, Glen Aust, Chris Balcom, Oscar Molina, Jerry Fraser, Joseph Hancock, Chris McIntire, Claudio Musajo, Michael Schwartz, Michael Tomaso, Zac Bissonnette, Valerie Patriarca, Scott Matthews, Nikhil Deogun*

Fresh, thought-provoking, and intrusive to the subject matter in all the right ways. We liked how the report asked the key question of who is responsible and examined how the U.S. has enabled some of these actions. It was nice to see examples of how these problems are being addressed as well. And judges appreciate the time and effort it took to track down all different story lines stories in a visual forum.

**CNBC**

Cyber Espionage: The Chinese Threat

*David Faber, Sabrina Korber, Jeff Pohlman, Steven T. Banton, Vito Tattoli, Gina Saudino, Angel Perez Sr., John Rehm, Rich Marko, Gerard Miller, David Grogan, Bob Briscoe, Herb Forsberg, Leroy Jackson, Jeff Kleinman, John Lawrence, Rob Massey, Adam Shanker, Mark Thalman, Paul Green, Dave Schumacher, Tony Stewart, Barry Weisblat, Everett Wong, Peter Kourkoumelis, Keith Kyak, Danielle Kennedy, Jennifer Schlesinger, Scott Matthews, Nikhil Deogun*

Incredibly prescient piece that did an impressive job of adding context. The judges appreciate what it took to track down a tough story to tell and tell is in an explainable and visual way.

**CNBC**

Health Care Hustle

*Scott Cohn, Catherine Corrigan, Sabrina Korber, Jeff Pohlman, Steven T. Banton, Conrad deVroeg, Vito Tattoli, Gina Saudino, Gerard Miller, David Grogan, Michael Vaughn, Christopher Balcom, Jerry Fraser, Todd Williams, Guy Morton, Mike Concepcion, Everett Wong, Michael Schwartz, Michael Tomaso, Zac Bissonnette, Valerie Patriarca, Scott Matthews, Nikhil Deogun*

The judges found the time and effort that went into this to be impressive. It’s an interesting look at a very important topic.

**DIVISION: REAL ESTATE**

**Sun Sentinel (Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.)**

Bad-Neighbor Banks

*Megan O’Matz, John Maines*

Entries like this remind us to be thankful for dogged journalists employed by regional newspapers dedicated to serving their communities. The foreclosure crisis has battered cities from coast to coast, but these reporters weren’t satisfied to just drive by increasing decay each day. Hard work and determination detailed in well-researched stories the role lenders were playing in a local nightmare that ended in a young child’s death. The stories were gripping and the art was compelling.

**The New York Times**

Mortgage

*Jessica Silver-Greenberg*

These stories on shoddy lending practices involving reverse mortgages and widows left off the loan documents of traditional mortgages, thus leaving them open to losing their homes, exemplified exclusive, sophisticated business journalism in the public service. Silver-Greenberg applied a healthy skepticism to the meme that the housing market was recovering and the abuses of the bubble were old news. Instead, her work showed that older Americans were being victimized by deceptive practices at worst and highly problematic mortgages at best.

**Newsday**

Insurance Catch-22

*Joe Ryan*

The “After Sandy” stories are a model of how to report and write on a complex (and often boring) topic: insurance. Ryan’s pieces are short, clear, authoritative and fascinating, not to mention a public service to the people of Long Island. He blends the complexity of the topic — including essential statistics, legalities and policies — with the story of real Long Islanders. These stories could be studied by students and professionals alike as proof that long doesn’t mean good.

**DIVISION: SMALL BUSINESS**

**Inc. Magazine**

After the Squeeze

*Burt Helm, Larry Kanter, Eric Schurenberg*

“After the Squeeze” went beyond the typical political blame game to demonstrate the challenges businesses face when one of their most important relationships — the one with their bankers — goes awry through no fault of their own. The damage chronicled by Inc.’s Burt Helm lingers today as the U.S. economy slowly recovers. Deeply reported tales, combined with practical advice, made this entry a clear winner.

**Newsday**

After Superstorm Sandy

*Lisa Du, Maura McDermott, Keiko Morris, Joe Ryan*

Newsday captured the devastating impact of Hurricane Sandy on Long Island’s small business community through excellent writing, compelling pictures and informative graphics. But Newsday also spun the story forward on important topics, such as insurance coverage and whether it was even worth the risk, in some cases, to reopen. Newsday’s coverage was comprehensive and poignant in depicting the diversity of Long Island’s stricken small businesses.

**Fortune**

How I Started

*Dinah Eng*

All big businesses started out small — and Fortune’s “How I Got Started” told readers just how some of today’s best-known entrepreneurs started with little and made it big. From Crate & Barrel using a cigar box for a cash register, to John Paul DeJoria living in his car while selling shampoo, Dinah Eng’s stories are rich with anecdotes and deeply-felt advice

**DIVISION: TECHNOLOGY**

**The New York Times**

Fake Reviews

*David Streitfeld*

Streitfeld takes us into the world of paid reviewers, people who will, for a small fee, say very nice things, multiple times, about your book/ restaurant/ product. He does a really nice job detailing this new review economy and how these reviews are replacing traditional advertising.

**Fortune**

Technology Coverage

*Miguel Helft, Jessi Hempel, Michal Lev-Ram, Adam Lashinsky*

Tech giants Amazon, Facebook and Apple influence all of our lives, yet explaining what makes these powerful companies tick is no easy task. Fortune’s tech writers, however, are easily up to the challenge by bringing us inside the minds of the likes of Jeff Bezos and Tim Cook in a way that reflects how their companies operate, and what makes these titans of the industry distinct. The pre-IPO story about Facebook, in particular, gives readers an unusually well-sourced, nuanced understanding about what has brought Facebook to its current level of success and the new challenges that stand in its way.

**Reuters**

Silicon Valley’s Dirty Secret – Age Bias

*Sarah McBride*

In “Silicon Valley’s Dirty Little Secret,” Sarah McBride of Reuters has found a scandal hiding in plain sight. If the captains of any other large American industry were caught discriminating against African Americans, women, Jews, gays or any other minority group heads would roll. But in Silicon Valley, where a culture of youth adoration remains alive and well, age discrimination is a built-in feature of the corporate culture. As technology professionals age they try to adapt to the looks and “likes” of the Facebook generation. But the fact remains that much of what appears to be “success” in the Silicon Valley is built on a corporate identity wrapped up in law-breaking.

**DIVISION: STUDENT**

**Stories Written for Student Publications**

**University of North Carolina**

UNC’s Bowl Ban Could Put Funding from Nike and Learfield Sports in Jeopardy

*Melvin Backman*

Looking at the “sacred” issue of sports financing and revealing the financial vulnerability of the athletic department (even one with a sports program as successful as UNC) showed great enterprise. The well reported piece explained how the cut in funding affected not only the sports but students who would have to pay more in fees to make up the shortfall.

**University of Missouri**

Foreclosure

*Walker Moskop*

(Honorable mention)

This easy-to-read, compelling story is an excellent, comprehensive look at one family, and by extension, the crisis of subprime mortgages and the damaging effects. The story also explains complex banking jargon and financial ratios in a way that’s easy readers to understand.

**Stories Written for Professional Publication**

**University of Missouri**

Yelp’s Ad Pitch Gets Bad Reviews

*Johanna Somers*

This piece stands out from the pack, in part because it offers solutions to the problem. There is a good range of sources including interviews with affected business owners. The story is sophisticated, well written and original.

**University of North Carolina**

Student Debtors Find Much Forgiven in Small Towns

*Jeanna Smialek*

(Honorable mention)

This piece offers a new twist on an old topic. It is well researched and written. The lede is very human and the writer came back to the example at story’s end, a nice touch. The scope of reporting is impressive with examples from multiple states.

**University of Missouri**

Different Policies Regulate College Student Data

*Allison Prang*

(Honorable mention)

There is good use of public records here. A lot of research went into this piece.

**Arizona State University’s Walter Cronkite School of Journalism**

Trump Post-Tiger Golf Bottom-Fishing Signals Rebound: Mortgages

*Christine Harvey*

(Honorable mention)

A new angle on the recession story that is well researched and sophisticated in approach. However, the reporter should spend more time on her writing. The piece, in spots, is hard to understand. Too many numbers presented in rapid succession.