

*Congress shall
make no law
respecting an
establishment
of religion, or
prohibiting
the free
exercise
thereof; or
abridging the
freedom of
speech, or of
the press; or
the right of the
people
peaceably to
assemble, and
to petition the
Government
for a redress of
grievances.*

*First Amendment
to the U.S.
Constitution*

Call for Nominations



SOCIETY OF
PROFESSIONAL
JOURNALISTS
NORTHERN
CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

presents the

24th Annual James Madison Freedom of Information Awards

The **James Madison Freedom of Information Awards** recognize Northern California organizations and individuals who have made significant contributions to the advancement of freedom of information and expression in the spirit of James Madison, the creative force behind the First Amendment. The awards are presented at a ceremony in March during National Freedom of Information Week near the anniversary of Madison's birth.

Eligible for nomination are Northern California journalists, citizens, media organizations, or community groups which, during 2008, have defended public access to meetings, public records, meetings or court proceedings or otherwise promoted the public's right to know, publish and speak freely about issues of public concern.

Award Categories (awards may not be given in every category):

Professional Journalist	Citizen	Legal Counsel
Nonprofit Organization	Public Official	Student Journalist
Source/Whistle Blower	Educator	Electronic Access
Career Achievement	Cartoonist	News Media

- The Professional Journalist and Student Journalist awards recognize journalists who have been involved in fights for access to records, meetings or court proceedings, who have made exceptional use of public records in their reporting or who have promoted education on FOI issues through stories, editorials or other advocacy.
- The Public Official award is given to a governmental official who has demonstrated extraordinary commitment to keeping public records or meetings public, or otherwise has taken exemplary leadership on FOI or First Amendment issues.
- The Beverly Kees Educator Award recognizes extraordinary efforts by educators to cultivate a devotion to the values of freedom of information.
- The Norwin S. Yoffie Career Achievement Award is named in honor of a stalwart supporter of the chapter's Freedom of Information Committee, who died in November 2000 after many years of distinguished service to SPJ and the cause of freedom of information.

See <http://www.spj.org/norcal/awards/foiwinners.html> for past award recipients.

Deadline: Entries must be e-mailed January 9, 2009.

Entry Form

email entries only to

jmawards@thefirstamendment.org

include "James Madison award nomination" on subject line

email questions only to:

James Madison Awards Nominations chair:

David Greene

dgreene@thefirstamendment.org

Category _____

Nominee's name _____

Address _____

Home phone _____ Work phone _____

E-mail _____

Nominator _____

Address _____

Home phone _____ Work phone _____

E-mail _____

Submission Guidelines:

For each entry, please submit an electronic file containing the following:

- A. This entry form (or an approximate version thereof)
- B. A cover letter with the following information:
 - i. A summary of the story, stories or action taken.
 - ii. A description of the freedom of information aspect of the story or action, specifically explaining how freedom of information laws and tools were employed and/or how the story or actions shed light on governmental activities.
 - iii. A discussion of major findings, achievements and subsequent results (i.e., did other outlets pick up the story; did new legislation, regulatory change or better public service result from the story or action).
 - iv. An account of the difficulty or uniqueness of effort in obtaining the story or pursuing the action.
- C. Supporting documents including published stories and any other supporting material that demonstrates the merit of nomination. These materials should be scanned and submitted electronically.
- D. Any corrections, clarifications or retractions made after initial publication or broadcast of stories must be submitted as part of the entry. Also, copies of any challenges to the story's accuracy, including but not limited to letters and requests for corrections or retractions, as well as responses by the newspaper, must be included in the submission.

Judges:

Judges are the members of the Freedom of Information Committee of the Society of Professional Journalists, Northern California Chapter.