

NORCAL MEDIA WEEK



A CHOOSE-YOUR-OWN-ADVENTURE JOURNALISM SPIRIT WEEK

OVERVIEW

Looking for a way to boost your publication staff to the next level? Check out this week-long set of activities in which you and your staffs are *in charge* of how you want to participate, and we — the Journalism Education Association of Northern California — offering a ton of cash (up to \$10,000) in incentives designed to motivate you and your staffs to make this the best journalism week ever!

TIMELINE

1. We will release the full instructions for NMW on Saturday, Sept. 25, for a week of prep (script writing, vow writing, scheduling critiques and discussion times, and more).
2. A week later, on Saturday, Oct. 2, the real fun begins when we open most of our activities. This is your target date to start filming, shooting, designing, writing those editorials, editing, taking those vows and so forth. (You can do most or all of this from home, so if you are at a school that has this week off, you can still participate!)
3. NMW will come to a crescendo on Saturday, Oct. 9, with a flurry of closing events and deadlines, and the beginning of us sorting out how much your staff has earned. (It may take us a few days!) Want a new staff camera? A pizza party? T-shirts for your staff? Gear for a podcast studio? All are possible. Just make sure your adviser fills out the [NMW Wrap-up: Adviser Reflection and Accounting form](#) by 11:59 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 9

And, for those of you who have been paying attention, yes, this is technically a two-week event, a fortnight, if you will. But rather than thinking of this as a Hunger Games-like elimination contest, we see it more as a ropes-course-get-everyone-and-every-staff-over-the-wall kind of event. Intrigued? Read on!

BACKGROUND

We all know journalism students benefit from a chance to connect with each other at the start of the year. But with our regular regional NorCal Media Day not an option this year because of the pandemic, and with the idea of replacing it with a Saturday Zoom conference seeming — well, that was so last year — we've decided to go a third route: A *choose-your-own-adventure*-style journalism spirit week.

If you can't hang out with 400 other journalism students at a regional conference, you certainly can hang out with your own staffs — in person or remotely — with an eye toward the larger world. That's what NorCal Media Week is all about.

GUIDING VALUES

Because publication staffs have different needs and perhaps even COVID-19 restrictions about how they can meet, we invite staffs to "choose your own adventure." JEANC designed your NMW options with the following characteristics in mind:

- flexibility for each staff
- opportunities for as many students to participate as possible, within and outside your staff
- commitment to growth and improvement

PROJECTS

Here are the projects we're suggesting, all with a touchpoint on Saturday, Oct. 9, and your staff can earn \$50 per activity* just for doing them!

1. **[Staff Video](#)** — Maybe you're interested in recruiting other staff members, building your audience, or supporting a cause. Either way, we want to see what you can do with a camera and a smart script (that you write!). Here's a video we found [from Lafayette, Missouri](#), that does that. And another [one from The Pinion in Honolulu, Hawaii](#). And this cool [one from Santa Barbara City College](#). Or maybe you'd like to celebrate the First Amendment? Bonus points for somehow involving students from other schools. Submit your video by 11:59 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 9.
2. **[Critique](#)** — You and your staff are invited to [sit down with a JEANC board member](#) or recently retired JEANC adviser to talk about strengths and weaknesses of your current publication. The resulting To Do list — if you follow through with acting on it — could raise the impact (and stature) of your publication in your community and beyond. Just going through the process will likely open your staff's collective eyes to a better way of doing what you already do. JEANC normally charges a fee for its critique service, but during NMW there is no charge — in fact, we'll pay *you* to do this! Submit your staff's new To Do list after your critique and earn a *cash for your staff*.
3. **[Roundtable discussion](#)** — OK, so this is a Zoom thing. But how much better that it's organized by students for students. You pick the topic (leadership, advertising sales, design, wildfire coverage, #metoo, for instance) and pitch it to us by filling out the Google form during the week of Sept. 26 to Oct. 2. You will need to include some times in the next week you think might draw a crowd. We'll help you publicize it and give you \$50 for hosting and organizing; but, you also need students from at least 3 different schools. You could host in the evening, during the day or on Saturday. To have your proposal be one

of five (paid) JEANC Roundtable discussions for NMW, [click here to pitch us your best roundtable discussion](#)

4. **Conduct a [publication diversity audit](#)** — Did the demographic breakdown of your sources for last year’s magazine match the demographic profile of your school? Did you interview 10 times as many seniors as freshmen? How about the gender breakdown of your sources? You can find out by doing a diversity audit. We’ll show you how. Write and publish an editorial about your results and your commitment to do better and we’ll give your work an extra boost on our social media. But the real benefit to doing this work will be that you will be improving coverage of your community. Maybe this will be the first step to some other serious conversations about equity.
5. **[Yearbook theme package makeover](#)** — Fall means yearbook theme development time! We’ll provide a packet of resources to help your yearbook leadership teams develop a theme that is specific to your school and this year. After they spend some time working through plans for their concept, we’ll offer a Zoom panel critique session, during which they can talk through the theme with a panel of experienced advisers and yearbook reps and receive feedback. Staffs can enter a yearbook theme contest as well, with their work-in-progress! Details on this contest/critique can be found [here](#).
6. **[Staff commitment ceremony](#)** — Are you ready to commit — again? Commitment ceremonies are a great way to have your staff say “I do” to creating quality work for their publications. We have examples from past commitment ceremonies, where staffs express their undying devotion, at least through the year. If you’re ready to take the plunge, check out the staff commitment ceremony page for more details. Maybe you can use the money you’ll earn from doing this activity to pay for the cake!
7. **[Cell Phone Photo Contest](#)** — We’re doubling down on our fun and [friendly cell phone contest from 2020](#), building on the same contest outlines and providing yet another way for you to earn awards. [Submit your entries](#) by 11.59 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 9, and then look in the days to come for the video posting of our evaluator as they make their decisions.
8. **[Lede contest](#)** — Most of us know that a solid lede often contains the 5W’s +H. But questions remain: Who’s the who? What’s the what? A little extra effort put into your lede can be the difference between an article that makes a difference and an article that never gets read. Submit your best work to this contest, and we’ll reward the best of the best with cash prizes.
9. **[Design your own NMW activity](#)** — Got a great plan for your staff that you think will inspire the JEANC board and your fellow students? Maybe a way to produce a joint advertising contract with a staff at a nearby school? A community project with a link to journalism? Propose it, plan it and get it done during NorCal Media Week. Headline your idea “Idea for NMW activity” and submit it to us using the [JEANC “Contact Us”](#) form. We’re looking forward to hearing about your ideas!
10. **\$50 Bonus** for completing five or more NMW activities.

FINANCIAL REWARDS FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

We're offering up an incentive of up to \$50-per-activity* for participation in NorCal Media Day. That means if you do all 10 activities (at a qualifying level), your staff can earn up to \$500* that you can put toward purchases of your choice. The money goes to your adviser to deposit into your school publication account and to use for your program. We trust you to use it as best fits your needs. Just make sure your adviser submits the [NMW Wrap-up: Adviser Reflection and Accounting form](#) by 11:59 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 9. Some things we think you might like to spend it on:

- A pizza party
- Merch! Staff T-shirts, sweatshirts, lanyards, stickers. Boba for everyone on staff at your next production session or staff work night
- A gift of donuts to a nearby high school (or middle school?) journalism staff you'd like to get a little closer to
- Journalism tech: A camera, a drone, a printer, microphones? Build yourselves a podcast studio?
- A staff microwave, a Keurig machine? A year-long supply of cupcakes?
- To pay for your [JEANC Annual Contest](#) entries in the spring.
- A donation to the [Student Press Law Center](#)
- What do you have in mind?

The more you earn, the more options you'll have to spend it. So what are you waiting for?

*JEANC will award up to \$10,000 in cash prizes for participating NorCal schools. The value of each incentive reward is based on the number of participating schools. We hope to distribute as much of the prize money as possible.

ELIGIBILITY

- Students of all current JEANC member advisers (Join [here!](#)) are eligible.
- Depending on the NMW activity, submissions may be uploaded by editors or by their adviser. Please see each activity page for details. But we're looking for an adviser to fill out the final [Adviser Wrap-Up: Adviser Reflection and Accounting form](#).
- Final products must be submitted digitally through appropriate JEANC links.
- You should own the copyright for any work submitted unless you can make a [fair use](#) claim.

TARGET DEADLINE

Aim to do your project on — or complete it by — 11:59 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 9, 2021 If you miss it, you might not be considered for the awards segment of this program, but you're really doing these because they're worth doing, right? So don't let the Oct. 9 day be the end-all-and-be-all for your projects.

WRAP-UP: ADVISER REFLECTION AND ACCOUNTING

In the end, we're hoping to hear from journalism advisers about their thoughts about NorCal Media Week, and also how much they think their staffs have earned through their participation. To that end, advisers, must [fill out this form](#) by 11:59 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 9. Thank you!

QUESTIONS?

If you have questions, concerns or suggestions related to NorCal Media Week, please reach out to us using the [JEANC "Contact Us"](#) form or contact the individual board member connected with each activity.