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STUDENTS ARE THE HEART OF OUR WORK!

Wando High School

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Media Release

Newspaper and yearbook students at Wando rack up national honors

Mount Pleasant, SC – Wando High School's student newspaper, *Tribal Tribune*, and yearbook, *Legend*, continue to shine at the national level. The students' work in the two publications led to a record haul (of awards) at last month's 2023 National Scholastic Press Association fall conference. Then, *Legend* picked up more honors from Quill and Scroll this month, including the Blue and Gold Staff Excellence Award for the second year in a row.

Quill and Scroll

The Blue and Gold Staff Excellence Award is the international journalism organization's highest honor given to a yearbook staff. *Legend* earned the award because the Warriors received the most individual honors in Quill and Scroll's annual Yearbook Excellence Contest for schools with 1,000 or more students.

In addition, *Legend* picked up staff awards for Photography (second place), Design (third place), and Writing (third place).

The following students combined to win 16 individual honors:

First Place, Clubs and Organizations Spread - Senior Ava Kempinski
First Place, Sports Feature Writing - Junior Liv Craine
First Place, Sports Action Photography - Graduate Bella Schwinne
Second Place, Clubs and Organizations Spread - Graduate Katie Brown and senior Ava Kempinski
Second Place, Performing Arts Spread - Senior Emily Yaman
Second Place, Personality Profiles - Senior Olivia Cyr
Second Place, Clubs or Organizations - Senior Ella Davis
Second Place, Academic Photo - Graduate Lola Daniher
Second Place, Photo Illustration - Graduate Bella Schwinne
Third Place, Academics Spread - Junior Mya Andrus
Third Place, Sports Feature Writing - Graduate Jacob Pelbath
Third Place, Student Life Writing - Junior Maria Gonzalez
Third Place, Sports Action Photo - Graduate Bella Schwinne
Third Place, Performing Arts Photo - Graduate Bella Schwinne
Honorable Mention, Sports Spread - Junior Sadie Andrus
Honorable Mention, Personality Profiles - Junior Maria Gonzalez

National Scholastic Press Association

Wando newspaper and yearbook students shattered the school record for combined individual awards at the 2023 National Scholastic Press Association (NSPA) fall conference in Boston on November 4, 2023.

Legend yearbook and *Tribal Tribune* newspaper students combined for 11 NSPA individual national awards and won eight Best in Show awards for entries among all conference attendees (national and international). The 19 awards eclipsed the school's previous record of nine in 2020.

Junior Gabbi Mortellaro walked away with four individual awards, the most ever for a Wando student at a NSPA convention. Senior Elise Gierhart of *Legend* also broke this record with three awards (the previous mark was two).

"I think this is a superb moment going forward for Wando student media," explained Phillip Caston, an English teacher at Wando who serves as the adviser for the student newspaper and yearbook. "I'm proud of my yearbook students' growth, and I'm excited that my newspaper students have continued the legacy of excellence established by retired adviser Tammy Watkins."

The following students and their awards are listed here:

First Place, National Sports Story of the Year - Senior Jordan DeMario, *Tribal Tribune*
First Place, Best of Show, Sports Photo - Junior Gabbi Mortellaro, *Legend*
Second Place, National Designer of the Year - Senior Elise Gierhart, *Legend*
Second Place, Best of Show, Newspaper Design - Senior MC Warner, *Tribal Tribune*
Second Place, National Newspaper Design of the Year - Senior Charlotte Baxter, graduate Aseel Ibrahim, and graduate Emory Robinson, *Tribal Tribune*
Third Place, National Newspaper Design of the Year - Senior Livi Ralston, graduate Aseel Ibrahim, and graduate Emory Robinson, *Tribal Tribune*
Third Place, National Environmental Portrait of the Year - Graduate Bella Schwinne, *Legend*
Third Place, National Feature Story of the Year - Graduate Eleanor Yarbrough, *Tribal Tribune*
Third Place, Best of Show, Yearbook Design - Senior Ava Kempinski and graduate Katie Brown
Fourth Place, Best of Show, Sports Photo - Junior Gabbi Mortellaro, *Legend*
Fourth Place, National Environmental Portrait of the Year - Senior Scarlett Lewis, *Tribal Tribune*
Fourth Place, National News Photo of the Year - Junior Gabbi Mortellaro, *Legend*
Fifth Place, Best of Show, Feature Photo - Junior Gabbi Mortellaro, *Legend*
Sixth Place, Best of Show, Yearbook Design - Senior Elise Gierhart

Seventh Place, Best of Show, Editorial Leadership - Senior Elise Gierhart, *Legend*
Ninth Place, Best of Show, Editorial Leadership - Senior Jordan Davis, *Legend*
Honorable Mention, National Photojournalist of the Year - Graduate Bella Schwinne, *Legend*
Honorable Mention, National Editorial Cartoon of the Year - Senior Charlotte Baxter, *Tribal Tribune*
Honorable Mention, National Sports Story of the Year - Junior Liv Craine, *Legend*

"I feel so honored to be a part of this organization that I call my second family," said Mortellaro. "Yearbook has provided me with so many opportunities that I can't imagine not having in my life. It is so rewarding to win these awards and I am so grateful to all the people who have helped me to walk away with the successes that have been put to my name. Winning only makes me want to work harder and Wando yearbook is the best place to grow in my passion for photojournalism."

"Gabbi's achievement is a profound statement for the program," added Caston. "This is a wonderful opportunity for these two programs to walk side-by-side on the path to excellence in the future."

In addition, *Tribal Tribune* placed 7th in Best of Show for school newspapers (for schools with more than 1,800 students) at the conference.

For more information, contact Phillip Caston at phillip_caston@charleston.k12.sc.us.

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About the Charleston County School District

Charleston County School District (CCSD) is a nationally accredited school district committed to providing equitable and quality educational opportunities for all its students. CCSD is the second-largest school system in South Carolina and represents a unique blend of urban, suburban, and rural schools spanning 1,300 square miles along the coast. CCSD serves approximately 50,000 students in 88 schools and specialized programs.

CCSD offers a diverse portfolio of educational options and specialized programs delivered to the students of CCSD through neighborhood, magnet, IB (international baccalaureate), Montessori, and charter schools and programs. Rich educational opportunities for students include programs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); music and other creative and performing arts; career and technical preparation programs; military; dual credit; and many more.