Society of Professional Journalists
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The Society of Professional Journalists – Detroit Chapter Announces 2023 Journalist of the Year Finalists and Lifetime Achievement Honorees

This year's recipients along with nearly 300 Excellence in Journalism contest winners to be announced at the group's annual awards ceremony and banquet on May 15

DETROIT (April 19, 2024) – The Society of Professional Journalists – Detroit Chapter (SPJ Detroit) today announced the finalists for its 2023 Journalist of the Year and Young Journalist of the Year honors.

The chapter also announced the three recipients of its 2023 Lifetime Achievement Awards – all of whom will be honored May 15 at the organization's annual banquet and awards program.

Those finalists are:

Journalist of the Year

- **Bill Kubota**, *Detroit PBS*
- **Jamie LaReau**, **Phoebe Wall Howard** and **Eric Lawrence**, *Detroit Free Press*
- **Jonathon Oosting** and **Mike Wilkinson**, *Bridge Michigan*

Young Journalist of the Year

- **Jena Brooker**, *BridgeDetroit*
- **Nushrat Rahman**, *Detroit Free Press*
- **Simon Schuster**, *MLive*

The three highly respected Michigan journalists selected by the SPJ Detroit board of directors to receive Lifetime Achievement Awards are:

Carolyn Clifford. The 22-time Emmy Award-winning journalist anchors prime-time newscasts at *WXYZ-TV Detroit*. Raised in Detroit, she's deeply connected to her community. A Michigan State University graduate in broadcast journalism, her career spans prestigious roles across the country. Beyond anchoring, she's championed health programs and philanthropic causes, from literacy to domestic violence awareness. Her numerous accolades include induction into the Michigan Journalism and the Michigan Broadcasting Hall of Fame. A devoted mother, mentor and volunteer, Clifford's impact extends beyond broadcasting, embodying service and excellence in all she does.

Kirthmon F. Dozier. As a photojournalist at the *Detroit Free Press*, Dozier was a familiar face on football sidelines, basketball courts and in the dugouts and ice arenas throughout Michigan. His photos captured some of the most indelible images of Michigan's sports heroes. From the Pistons championships to the Wings Stanley Cup runs to Miguel Cabrera's final day as a Tiger, Dozier created iconic images that graced the front page and sports sections of the *Free Press* for nearly three decades. Dozier, who began his career at the *Bellingham (Washington) Herald* before stints at *The Detroit News* and *Newsday* of Long Island, New York, returned to Detroit in 1995. Sadly, Dozier passed away earlier this year. We are pleased to honor him, and we send our condolences to his family and colleagues.

Luther Keith. The executive director of *ARISE Detroit!*, -- a 19-year-old nonprofit coalition of block clubs, community associations and churches promoting volunteerism, community activism and positive media images to create a better Detroit -- has an outstanding journalism background. Prior to founding *ARISE Detroit!*, Keith spent more than 30 years at *The Detroit News* in a variety of capacities including assistant managing editor, senior editor and columnist. He was inducted into the Michigan Journalism Hall of Fame in 1995. In the mid-1980s, he took a leave from *The News* to become the founding director of what is now known as the Journalism Institute for Media Diversity at Wayne State University, with the mission of recruiting, training and placing minority students in media jobs.

In addition to these honorees, SPJ Detroit will name the recipients of its 2024 Larry Laurain scholarships. These scholarships are given annually to college students with an expressed interest in journalism.

The awards will be presented at SPJ Detroit's annual Excellence in Journalism awards ceremony and banquet, on Wednesday, May 15, at the San Marino Club, 1685 E. Big Beaver Road in Troy, Michigan.

Nearly 300 first, second and third place award winners, along with honorable mention awards, will be presented at the event. These awards recognize Michigan's best journalists and their work during 2023, as selected by a panel of veteran journalists from media organizations outside of Michigan.

Tickets and additional information are available at spjdetroit.org. Funds raised will benefit SPJ Detroit's scholarship fund.

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