



Kentucky Broadcasters Association Excellence in Broadcasting Awards

2026 Competition Rules

Entries for the 2026 KBA Excellence in Broadcasting Awards, sponsored by the Kentucky Broadcasters Association, are submitted using an online platform accessible at <https://betternewspapercontest.com>. Below are instructions for submitting entries. Contest information and rules can be found at <https://www.kba.org/excellence-awards/>. If you have questions, please contact Becky Day at becky@kba.org or 209-552-6541.

DEADLINE

Entries must be submitted by
June 30, 2026 -- 11:59 p.m. EDT

PASSWORD

Temporary password: **KYbest1**

- If this is the first time your station has logged into the system for this year's contest, you must select one contact who will serve as the primary person for submitting entries. That person is the "Contestant Manager." She or he must be the first person to log in for your station. After the Contestant Manager submits two entries, this person will be able to designate additional people who will be able to enter on behalf of your organization. Those people will be called "Authorized Entrants."



- Visit <https://www.kba.org/excellence-awards-entry/> and click the “SUBMIT ENTRIES HERE” button or visit <https://betternewspapercontest.com/login> and select **2026 Kentucky KBA Excellence in Broadcasting Awards**

- The temporary password is **KYbest1** (case sensitive).

- Step-by-step entry instructions for the Contestant Manager and authorized entrants are here: <http://betterbnctsupport.com>.

- **IMPORTANT NOTES ON ENTRIES**

- **IF ENTRY REQUIRES A PASSWORD:** Entries should not be behind a paywall or password-protected area. If they must be, provide username/password info in the Comments section of your entry. If your website requires a subscription after reading several stories, please provide a login. PLEASE, test, retest and check again. Make sure that the login works from computers outside your office. If entries and attachments are inaccessible and judges cannot view the entry in may be disqualified.

- **ENTRY FORMAT:** The BetterBNC platform does not accept any audio or video files to be uploaded directly. **No MP3s**. Contestants may upload the file to any third-party site (YouTube, SoundCloud, Google Drive,Dropbox or similar service), then paste a link in the URL field on the entry form.

- For problems logging in, contact Becky Day at becky@kba.org. Do not use the “contact us” link on the online platform.

SUBMISSIONS

- KBA member news organizations are eligible to enter the contest. All entries must have been aired or posted between May 1, 2025 and April 30, 2026.



- No more than three names may be included per entry. If more than three people are involved in producing the work the award will be presented to the news organization. Please do NOT enter “staff”, “news team”, or “news organization” for the credit name. Please either enter names or leave this blank.
- There is a 15-minute limit for entries, with editing permitted to meet time limit, except for a 20-minute time limit for newscast entries *Changed from 30 minutes last year.* or if otherwise noted in rules for a specific category.
- Finalists will be announced. First-place awards will be given in all categories.
- All entries will be judged, but it is the judge’s discretion whether to name a winner when there is only one entry in a category.
- There is no limit to the number of entries that can be made in each category unless otherwise noted.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Please check, double check and re-check all the URLs, links and files that support your entry. We do not check every attachment. If the attachment to your entry doesn't open or function for judging, it may be disqualified.

SAVE THE DATE

The KBA Excellence in Broadcasting Awards will be presented on Sunday, October 25, 2026 the Galt House in Louisville, KY as part of KBA's Annual Conference.

DIVISIONS

TV: All stations compete regardless of market size.

Radio: All stations compete regardless of market size.

ENTRY FEES

\$15 per entry

Entry fees may be paid by credit card or invoiced. Go to <https://www.kba.org/excellence-awards-entry/> for payment form. Entry fees must be processed by the contest deadline.



CATEGORIES

TELEVISION

NEW CATEGORY!

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE OF THE YEAR (Television):

This award recognizes the outstanding achievement of a television account executive at a KBA member television station. A top sales leader for existing and new business, innovates and creates new revenue streams or ideas, embraces new digital sales revenue opportunities, exceeds sales goals or budget, demonstrates outstanding client relations and displays leadership skills within their sales team. Nominations must be submitted by either a General Manager or General Sales Manager. Note: The KBA is not asking for total sales revenue to be shared.

BEHIND THE SCENES: This award recognizes the outstanding achievements of an individual who works behind the scenes at a television station to support the overall achievement and operations of the station. Potential candidates include: traffic directors, graphic artists, video/sound engineers, camera operators, promotins, social media/web developers, IT/technical staff, etc. Dedication, morale, innovation, determination, passion, leadership, going above and beyond expectations, and other exemplary skills will be considered.

BROADCAST LEADERSHIP AWARD: This award recognizes an individual who has demonstrated exceptional leadership qualities, contributing significantly to their station(s) or communities. **CRITERIA:** Exceptional leadership through strategic thinking, communication, collaboration, decision-making, innovation, empathy, integrity, and inclusivity. The Broadcast Leadership Award inspires others to develop similar capabilities.

DAYTIME NEWSCAST: This award recognizes the best local daytime news program. **CRITERIA:** An entry must consist of two morning or early afternoon (before 3 p.m.) regularly scheduled newscasts from any two different days of the station's choice. All newscast entries must have been produced by the regular news staff. Commercial breaks must be removed but no other editing is permitted.

EVENING NEWSCAST: This award recognizes the best local evening news program. **CRITERIA:** An entry must consist of two evening (any time after 3 p.m.) regularly scheduled newscasts from any two different days of the station's choice. All newscast



entries must have been produced by the regular news staff. Commercial breaks must be removed but no other editing is permitted.

LOCALLY PRODUCED COMMERCIAL: This award recognizes the best single commercial produced by a member station on behalf of an advertiser. CRITERIA: Creativity, message delivery and production value.

METEOROLOGIST OF THE YEAR: A composite of work by a weather anchor. Not to exceed 10 minutes. Entries should demonstrate the meteorologist's ability to present weather in give a clear, concise, on-the-air report. Judges will consider writing and language skills as well as production ability.

NEWS ANCHOR OF THE YEAR: A composite of work by a news anchor. Not to exceed 10 minutes. Entries should demonstrate the anchor's ability to present stories in a clear, concise, accurate on-the-air report. Judges will consider writing, audience engagement and language skills as well as production ability.

NEWS REPORTER OF THE YEAR: A composite of work by a TV reporter. Not to exceed 10 minutes. Entries should demonstrate the reporter's ability to gather the news and give a clear, concise, on-the-air report. Judges will consider writing and language skills as well as production ability.

OVERALL DIGITAL PRESENCE: Judging is based on the audio, text, still images, video, and graphics used to enhance storytelling on digital and social media platforms. CRITERIA: Submit links to five online stories and/or social media posts, showcase work in presenting and telling stories digitally.

NEW CATEGORY!

PODCAST OF THE YEAR (Television):

Recognizes outstanding audio/video storytelling created by a KBA member television station, specifically for on-demand podcast platforms. Submissions must be original works produced for on-demand consumption, not rebroadcast or edited versions of previously aired content. Submissions must have been produced between May1, 2025 - April 30, 2026, and cannot exceed 5 continuous minutes in length.

ROOKIE OF THE YEAR: This award recognizes an individual who has made great strides in his/her first two years of employment in the television industry. Criteria: Employee must be serving in his/her first 24 months of broadcast employment at the time the award is presented. Dedication, morale, innovation, determination, passion, leadership, going above and beyond expectations, and other exemplary skills will be considered.



STATION OF THE YEAR: This award recognizes a television station for overall service to its listenership and communities. **CRITERIA:** Outstanding thoroughness in production, promotions, listener interaction, digital, social and overall delivery. **Considerations:** Enterprise in everyday reporting, breaking news, and specialty reporting throughout the year. Entry length may not exceed 30 minutes.

SPECIAL PROGRAM OR FEATURE: This award recognizes the best single program of a local news event or feature story. **CRITERIA:** Presentation, production values, interest of story covered and overall impact of the coverage. A single, serious, compelling program that documents or analyzes events, people, places, social conditions, lifestyles, political situations, etc. Entry may not exceed 30 minutes.

SPORTSCASTER OF THE YEAR: A composite of live or taped work by any sports anchor, reporter, and/or talk show host. Not to exceed 10 minutes

UNIQUELY KENTUCKY: This award recognizes a television station for the essential role that they play in the community they serve. Includes: public service campaigns and alerts, fundraisers, severe weather announcements, natural disaster coverage, human interest and investigative stories, uplifting/positive interviews and features, community awareness, etc. Entry length may not exceed 20-minute time limit. *Changed from 30 minutes last year.*

VIDEOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR: A composite of work, not to exceed 10 minutes. Judges will look for variety, use of color and natural sound, framing, lighting, pacing, editing, etc.

RADIO

*Reminder: The BetterBNC platform does not accept any audio or video files to be uploaded directly. **No MP3s.** Contestants may upload the file to any third-party site (YouTube, SoundCloud, Google Drive, Dropbox or similar service), then paste a link in the URL field on the entry form.*

NEW CATEGORY!

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE OF THE YEAR (Radio):

This award recognizes the outstanding achievement of a radio account executive at a KBA member television station. A top sales leader for existing and new business, innovates and creates new revenue streams or ideas, embraces new digital sales revenue opportunities, exceeds sales goals or budget, demonstrates outstanding client relations and displays leadership skills within their sales team. Nominations must be



submitted by either a General Manager or General Sales Manager. Note: The KBA is not asking for total sales revenue to be shared.

BEHIND THE SCENES: This award recognizes the outstanding achievements of an individual who works behind the scenes at a radio station to support the overall achievement and operations of the station. Potential candidates include: traffic directors, producers/board operators, promotions, social media/web developers, IT/technical staff, etc. Dedication, morale, innovation, determination, passion, leadership, going above and beyond expectations, and other exemplary skills will be considered.

BROADCAST LEADERSHIP AWARD: This award recognizes an individual who has demonstrated exceptional leadership qualities, contributing significantly to their station(s) or communities. **CRITERIA:** Exceptional leadership excellence through strategic thinking, communication, collaboration, decision-making, innovation, empathy, integrity, and inclusivity.

LOCALLY PRODUCED COMMERCIAL: This award recognizes the best single commercial produced by a member station on behalf of an advertiser. **CRITERIA:** Creativity, message delivery and production value.

MORNING SHOW: This award recognizes the best locally originated, regular scheduled morning radio show. **CRITERIA:** Entertainment value, creativity, production value, presentation, impact, audience engagement, community awareness and professionalism.

NEWS REPORTER OF THE YEAR: Radio reporters are to submit a composite of their work, not to exceed 10 minutes. Entries should demonstrate the reporter's ability to gather the news and give a clear, concise, on-the-air report. Judges will consider writing and language skills as well as production ability.

ON-AIR PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR: This award recognizes an individual who has established a reputation and public profile that is unique and best represents the member station. **CRITERIA:** Demonstrate an outstanding communication skill, innovation, audience engagement, and professionalism. Individual should demonstrate a passion for the work and interest in listeners and the community. All exemplary skills will be considered.

OVERALL DIGITAL PRESENCE: Judging is based on the audio, text, still images, video, and graphics used to enhance storytelling on digital and social media platforms. **CRITERIA:** Submit links to five online stories and/or social media posts, showcase work in presenting and telling stories digitally.



OVERALL NEWSCAST/NEWS COVERAGE: This award recognizes the best local radio newscast or coverage of a news event. **CRITERIA:** All entries must have been produced locally by the station staff. Entries may be a regularly scheduled newscast or special coverage of a single, serious, compelling event. Entries will be judged on stories with a clear, concise, accurate on-the-air report. Commercial breaks should be removed but no other editing is permitted.

NEW CATEGORY!

PODCAST OF THE YEAR (Radio):

Recognizes outstanding audio/video storytelling created by a KBA member radio station, specifically for on-demand podcast platforms. Submissions must be original works produced for on-demand consumption, not rebroadcast or edited versions of previously aired content. Submissions must have been produced between May 1, 2025 - April 30, 2026, and cannot exceed 5 continuous minutes in length.

ROOKIE OF THE YEAR: This award recognizes an individual who has made great strides in his/her first two years of employment in the radio industry. **Criteria:** Employee must be serving in his/her first 24 months of broadcast employment at the time the award is presented. Dedication, morale, innovation, determination, passion, leadership, going above and beyond expectations, and other exemplary skills will be considered.

STATION OF THE YEAR: This award recognizes a radio station for overall service to its listenership and communities. **CRITERIA:** Outstanding thoroughness in production, promotions, listener interaction, digital, social and overall delivery. **Considerations:** Enterprise in everyday reporting, breaking news, and specialty reporting throughout the year. Entry length may not exceed 30 minutes.

UNIQUELY KENTUCKY: This award recognizes a radio station for the essential role that it plays in the communities it serves. Includes: public service campaigns and alerts, fundraisers, severe weather announcements, natural disaster coverage, human interest and investigative stories, uplifting/positive interviews and features, community awareness, etc. Entry length may not exceed 20-minute time limit. *Changed from 30 minutes last year.*

SPORTS ANNOUNCER OF THE YEAR: This award recognizes the best announcer covering locally originated sport events, including play by play. **Criteria:** Presentation of facts, creativity and delivery. A composite of live or taped work may not exceed 10 minutes.

SPECIAL PROGRAM OR FEATURE: This award recognizes the best single program of a local news event or feature story. **CRITERIA:** Presentation, production values, interest of story covered and overall impact of the coverage. A single, serious, compelling program that documents or analyzes events, people, places, social



conditions, lifestyles, political situations, etc. Entry may not exceed 20-minute time limit. *Changed from 30 minutes last year*

TALK SHOW: This award recognizes the best regularly scheduled long-form radio talk show. **CRITERIA:** An entry must be a locally hosted and produced talk show, airing no less than one time per month. Include audio samples with commercial breaks removed. Entry length may not exceed 20-minute time limit. *Changed from 30 minutes last year.*

USE OF STREAMING VIDEO: This award recognizes the outstanding efforts made by a radio station to implement video into their community outreach and local programming. **CRITERIA:** Presentation, production values, editing, graphics and overall delivery. Entry may not exceed 20-minute time limit. *Changed from 30 minutes last year.*

Kentucky Broadcasters Association Excellence in Broadcasting Awards

2025 COLLEGE BROADCASTING AWARDS

SUBMISSIONS

- All colleges and universities in Kentucky are eligible to enter the contest. All entries must have aired or posted between May 1, 2024 and April 30, 2025.
- No more than three names may be included per entry. If more than three people are involved in producing the work the award will be presented to the news organization. Please do NOT enter “staff”, “news team”, or “news organization” for the credit name. Please either enter names or leave this blank.
- There is a 15-minute limit for entries, with editing permitted to meet time limit, with the exception of a 20-minute time limit (*Changed from 30 minutes last year*) for newscast entries or if otherwise noted in rules for a specific category.
- Finalists will be announced. First-place awards will be given in all categories.
- All entries will be judged, but it is the judge’s discretion whether to name a winner when there is only one entry in a category.



- There is no limit to the number of entries that can be made in each category unless otherwise note

DIVISIONS

COLLEGE TV

COLLEGE RADIO

ENTRY FEES

\$15 per entry

Entry fees may be paid by credit card or invoiced. Go to <https://www.kba.org/excellence-awards-entry/> for payment form. Entry fees must be processed by the contest deadline.

CATEGORIES

COLLEGE TV

COLLEGE PROGRAM OF THE YEAR: Recognizing the best single television program at a Kentucky college or university. **CRITERIA:** Outstanding thoroughness in production, promotions, listener interaction, digital, social and overall delivery. **Considerations:** enterprise in everyday reporting, breaking news, and specialty reporting throughout the year. Entry length may not exceed 20-minute time limit (*Changed from 30 minutes last year*)

STUDENT BROADCASTER OF THE YEAR: This award recognizes a student who demonstrates an outstanding communication skill, innovation, audience engagement, and professionalism in television broadcasting. Special program hosts, and sports



announcers are included. The individual should demonstrate a passion for their work, interest in their viewers and knowledge of the story or event they are covering. All exemplary skills will be considered.

NEWS REPORTER OF THE YEAR: This award recognizes a student's abilities to report on a hard news issue. A news package should demonstrate outstanding communication skill, innovation, audience engagement, and professionalism. The individual should demonstrate a passion for their work, interest in their viewers and knowledge of the news story they are covering. All exemplary skills will be considered.

NEWSCAST/COVERAGE: Submit up to two examples of coverage from any time slot. Entry length may not exceed 20-minute time limit (*Changed from 30 minutes last year*)

SPECIAL PROGRAM OR FEATURE: Any type of human-interest story.

OVERALL DIGITAL PRESENCE: Judging is based on the audio, text, still images, video, and graphics used to enhance storytelling on digital platforms. **CRITERIA:** Submit links to five online stories and/or social media posts, showcase work in presenting and telling stories digitally.

COLLEGE RADIO

COLLEGE PROGRAM OF THE YEAR: This award recognizes the best overall radio program at a Kentucky college or university. **CRITERIA:** Outstanding thoroughness in production, promotions, listener interaction, digital, social and overall delivery. **Considerations:** enterprise in everyday reporting, breaking news, and specialty reporting throughout the year. Entry length may not exceed 20-minute time limit (*Changed from 30 minutes last year*)

STUDENT BROADCASTER OF THE YEAR: This award recognizes a student who demonstrates an outstanding communication skill, innovation, audience engagement, and professionalism in radio broadcasting. Special program hosts, and sports announcers are included. The individual should demonstrate a passion for their work, interest in their listeners and knowledge of the story or event they are covering. All exemplary skills will be considered.

NEWS REPORTER OF THE YEAR: This award recognizes a student's abilities to report on a hard news issue. A news package should demonstrate outstanding



communication skill, innovation, audience engagement, and professionalism. The individual should demonstrate a passion for their work, interest in their listeners and knowledge of the news story they are covering. All exemplary skills will be considered.

NEWSCAST/COVERAGE: Submit up to two examples of coverage from any time slot. Entry length may not exceed 20-minute time limit (*Changed from 30 minutes last year*)

SPECIAL PROGRAM OR FEATURE: Any type of human-interest story.

OVERALL DIGITAL PRESENCE: Judging is based on the audio, text, still images, video, and graphics used to enhance storytelling on digital and social media platforms. **CRITERIA:** Submit links to five online stories and/or social media posts, showcase work in presenting and telling stories digitally.