



2026 Pinnacle Awards

Criteria and Rules

This competition was established in 1958 to encourage and recognize the highest standards of reporting, community service and production creativity by Nebraska radio and television stations. The NBA thanks our Pinnacle Awards sponsors – Pinnacle Bank and Nebraska Public Power District – for their generous support.

Dates and Details

ENTRY DATES

April 9 through 5:00 P.M. CT, April 28, 2026

ENTRY COST

\$30.00 per entry.

College student entries are FREE.

Entry fees must be paid with credit card.

Please upload your entries for ALL entry sessions, and make one payment after everything is uploaded. Entries are not considered complete until paid for.

AWARDS

GOLD - 1st place plaque.

SILVER - 2nd place plaque.

BRONZE - 3rd place plaque.

PINNACLE AWARDS BANQUET

Wednesday, August 12, 2026

Embassy Suites – Lincoln

Entry Process

USING THE “ROCK OUR AWARDS” ONLINE ENTRY SYSTEM

Get familiar with the entry process during our “practice window” from April 1 – April 7. Once the official entry window opens, DO NOT wait until the last day to submit your entries. Too many late entries can stress the entry site and limit the NBA’s ability to answer last-minute questions. Rock Our Awards is fast and easy to use! Please see page 6 for helpful tips.

JUDGING

Broadcasters from another state judge all NBA entries, based on content, technical quality, professionalism, creativity (where appropriate) and the overall execution of the entry. The number of awards given is at the judges’ discretion and no ties are allowed. If judges deem no entries in any category represent “excellence,” no awards will be given in that category.

General Rules: Radio, TV and College Student Entries

- ★ Entries are limited to NBA member stations, colleges & universities in good standing.
- ★ There are separate contests and awards for Radio stations, Television stations and College Student entries.
- ★ Only locally produced content created and broadcasted over the air by local NBA station members is eligible. *Entries that appeared solely on a station website or station-affiliated website are NOT eligible except where noted.*
- ★ Stations are solely responsible for submitting entries in the correct category. Entries found to not meet category criteria are disqualified with no refund or notification. Stations must assure their content/links remain accessible through July 31. Missing entries or those with expired links will be disqualified with no refund.
- ★ **ALL ENTRIES MUST HAVE FIRST AIRED BETWEEN April 1, 2025 and March 31, 2026.**
- ★ All entries for **Best Newscast, Best Sportscast and Best Weathercast (TV) must have aired on Wednesday, February 18, 2026.**
- ★ Stations must have the rights to all music, sound effects, video and images used in each submission.
- ★ All long form entries (newscasts, public affairs programs, play by play, etc.) **cannot exceed 7 minutes in length.** These entries can only be edited to remove spots & promos; editing long form programs into a "best of" compilation of the original longer program is prohibited, except for "Best Local Radio Show."
- ★ You may submit entries in as few as one or as many as all categories.
- ★ An entry can only be submitted in **one** category.
- ★ Spanish language entries are accepted with the understanding they will be judged alongside corresponding English language entries within the same categories. Please upload the English transcript or overdub as part of your entry. Be sure to name these files so it is clear that it is a transcript or overdub.
- ★ TV and Radio categories not receiving a minimum of four (4) entries from at least three (3) different SEU's will not be judged and related entry fees will be refunded.
- ★ College categories not receiving a minimum of two (2) entries from two (2) different colleges will not be judged or awarded.

Radio & TV Categories

NEW IN 2026: BEST PODCAST (3 entries/station, max.)

Recognizes outstanding audio (Radio) or video (TV) storytelling created 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 cannot exceed 7 continuous minutes in length.

NEW IN 2026: BEST USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS (3 entries/station, max.)

Recognizes an outstanding compilation of social media content to connect with audiences and inform the public. Representing one story or topic, each submission must include at least two and up to four URLs to the relevant social media posts.

BEST NEWSCAST (only 1 entry per station)

Newscast can be edited only to exclude commercials/promos. **Only one newscast that aired on Wednesday, February 18, 2026 can be submitted.** Submission cannot exceed 7 minutes in length.

BEST WEATHERCAST (TV only) (only 1 entry per station)

Weathercast can be edited only to exclude commercials/promos. **Only one weathercast that aired on Wednesday, February 18, 2026 can be submitted.** Submission cannot exceed 7 minutes in length.

BEST SPORTSCAST (only 1 entry per station)

Sportscast can be edited only to exclude commercials/promos. **Only one sportscast that aired on Wednesday, February 18, 2026 can be submitted.** Submission cannot exceed 7 minutes in length.

BEST SPOT NEWS REPORTING (3 entries/station, max.)

Single report of an unplanned or unscheduled story. Submission cannot exceed 7 minutes in length.

BEST CONTINUING COVERAGE OF A NEWS STORY (3 entries/station, max.)

Submission cannot exceed 7 minutes in length.

BEST IN-DEPTH OR INVESTIGATIVE STORY (3 entries/station, max.)

Submission cannot exceed 7 minutes in length.

BEST SPOT WEATHER (Radio and TV) (3 entries/station, max.)

A locally produced weather report focused on a weather “event” (blizzard, tornado, severe thunderstorm, extreme heat, etc.). Up to 7 minutes in length, unedited (other than removal of commercials/promos).

BEST MULTIPLATFORM JOURNALISM (3 entries/station, max.)

Best coverage of a single-story using audio, video, online and social media elements. Audio & video elements cannot exceed 7 minutes in length. Content must be the product of the station entering it.

BEST SPORTS PLAY-BY-PLAY - RADIO (3 entries/station, max. Limit play by play to one game per entry.)

Entries *cannot* be edited into a series of “best of” moments of a broadcast and cannot exceed 7 minutes in length.

Radio & TV Categories - Continued

BEST ON THE SCENE SPORTS REPORTING - TV (3 entries/station, max.)

Reporting live from the site of a sports event; before, during of after said event. Entry cannot exceed 7 minutes in length.

BEST SPORTS FEATURE STORY (3 entries/station, max.)

Submission cannot exceed 7 minutes in length.

BEST COMMERCIAL (3 entries/station, max.)

Best client commercial, any common length up to 60 seconds.

BEST STATION PROMO (3 entries/station, max.)

Best on-air promotional announcement to promote station brand or image, person, program or station event; written, produced & edited by station. Any length up to 60 seconds.

BEST LOCAL RADIO SHOW (only 1 entry per station)

Recognizes the best local radio show created with content generated predominantly by local, in-station personnel with limited (if any) use of network and/or syndicated content. No syndicated shows unless the show is syndicated by the station itself. Entry can be a "best of" compilation of show content that aired between 4/1/25 and 3/31/26. Entry cannot exceed 7 minutes in length. No PDF narrative.

SERVICE TO AGRICULTURE (3 entries/station, max.)

Any program, program series, public service announcement or series of public service announcements devoted to advancing the positive interest of agriculture. Program submission cannot exceed 7 minutes in length.

SERVICE TO BUSINESS, INDUSTRY, GOVERNMENT OR EDUCATION (3 entries /station, max.)

Any program, program series, public service announcement or series of public service announcements devoted to advancing the positive interest of any classification above. Program submissions cannot exceed 7 minutes in length.

SERVICE TO CHILDREN (3 entries/station, max.)

Any program or program series developed to serve the education and informational needs of children ages 16 or under; or, any public service announcement, series of announcements or short subjects for the benefit of children in the local listening or viewing audience. Program submission cannot exceed 7 minutes in length.

STATION ORIGINATED COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT (3 entries/station, max.)

One project with single or multiple beneficiaries that is originated by your station and promoted exclusively by your station. (This is NOT an award for your promotional support of a campaign or event originated or run by another entity). This category is meant to display the contributions that your station has made for the betterment of your community. Submission for this category must include: 1) broadcast example(s) from PSAs to full programs no more than 7 minutes in length; 2) a narrative, not over one typed page (PDF format). Stations may also submit up to 3 pages of other materials such as photos and testimonials.

Radio & TV Categories - Continued

STATION OF THE YEAR (only 1 entry per station)

One radio and one TV award will be judged in three separate parts with each part representing an equal 1/3 of the total. Each of the three areas will be judged on a 10-point scale for a maximum of 30 points.

- Audio/Video excerpt (maximum 3 minutes) – Does your station look/sound amazing? Is your station talent top notch? Submit a highlight reel of your station's overall programming. This video should also include anything important to your audience with specific emphasis on the community. Judging criteria includes immediacy of content to the community, relatability and overall sound/appearance.
- Community involvement (written: 500 word maximum) – Explain how your station and station talent is at the forefront of the community. Are you committed to the betterment of the community? Using your station's resources and talent for the benefit of the community and localism efforts? Tell us all of the amazing things you do to make your area a better place!
- Industry leadership (written: 500 word maximum) – Tell us how your station is carrying the torch for the broadcast industry. Examples include: airing announcements that promote the broadcast industry; supporting NBA initiatives; air talent reaching out to the next generation of broadcasters through educational initiatives and career fairs; job shadowing and internships; station tours, etc. We want to hear about all the awesome ways that your station celebrates and furthers the industry.

Limit of one submission per station based on FCC-assigned call letters & city of license. A minimum of three total entries from three different SEUs in each medium must be submitted for this category to be judged. Three nominees for both Radio & TV will be named finalists, with one winner from each medium to be announced at the Pinnacle Awards banquet.

College Student Categories - Radio & Television

The General Rules displayed earlier in this document apply to all College Student Entries, along with the following criteria:

- Student category entries must have been written and/or produced by students while enrolled either at a college with a NBA member station or a member college program.
- Entries must have been broadcast on the designated campus radio or television station(s) which can include over the air, local access cable, and/or an online platform.
- Only one entry per category, per college/university is allowed. Entries can only be submitted by faculty/staff.
- Categories without a minimum of 2 entries from 2 different colleges will not be judged or awarded in order to maintain a fair contest with meaningful comparisons.

BEST PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT 60 seconds or less.

BEST PROMOTIONAL ANNOUNCEMENT 60 seconds or less.

BEST NEWS STORY Up to 3 minutes in length, reported in a regularly scheduled program.

BEST NEWS FEATURE Up to 5 minutes in length, as a portion of a regularly scheduled program or specialty report.

BEST SPORTS NEWS STORY Up to 3 minutes in length, reported in sports or a regularly scheduled program.

BEST LIVE SPORTS EVENT Any length up to 7 minutes of one event.

RockOurAwards.com Entry Instructions

Log in or create your RockOurAwards.com account. Create a profile (username and password) by clicking the “Register” button on the top of the RockOurAwards.com homepage. Complete the information, click submit and you’ll be taken to the Nebraska Broadcasters Association homepage. Forgot your password? Email info@rockourawards.com

Register Form

Sample Broadcasting Co.

WTST

Nebraska

Radio

Joseph Smith

jsmith@sample.com sampleradio

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From the homepage you can review Pinnacle Awards rules, submit an entry, view and edit an entry, or edit your station’s information using the buttons on the right.

STATION MY BILLING TRANSACTION FAQS CONTACT US LOG OUT

NBA
NEBRASKA
BROADCASTERS
ASSOCIATION

2023 Pinnacle Awards

Sponsored by Pinnacle Bank and Nebraska Public Power District

STATION DETAILS

Company: RockOurAwards Nebraska
User: Jordan Walton
State: Nebraska
Station Type: Radio
My Total Entries: 1

Entry Form
View My Entries
Edit My Station
Log Out

To enter a category, click blue “Entry Form” and fill in the information. **The headline/title should be what you would want shown on a plaque.** Please note the blue “Submit” button is on the bottom left of the entry page.

STATION MY BILLING TRANSACTION FAQS CONTACT US LOG OUT

Create New Entry

Category: Select Category

Call Letters: Call Letters

Headline or Title of Entry: Entry Title

Upload Attachments & Links

Upload Attachment(s)

Comments & Credits

Comments

Who should be credited for this entry?

First Name Last Name Position

Submit

STATION DETAILS

Company: RockOurAwards
User: Jordan Walton
State: Nebraska
Station Type: TV
My Total Entries: 1

Entry Form
View My Entries
Edit My Station
Log Out

Acceptable file formats to upload to the site are .mp3, .jpg, .gif, .png, .bmp, .doc, docx, .wma, .pdf, .mp4, .wmv and .mov files.

IMPORTANT

- ★ To ensure server space for all states, RockOurAwards.com requires video entries to be linked from YouTube, Vimeo, other video hosting sites, or a station website. Simply copy/paste the videos URL in the “Add Link” section.
- ★ Certain special characters **MUST** be avoided in file names. Stick with letters, numbers, &, dots, dashes and underscores. **DO NOT USE # or APOSTROPHES as the system cannot accept them.**

If you have questions or are running into trouble, email info@rockourawards.com or call 800-471-1875.