



## First Annual Rasmussen Family Fairness Award

### *Application Guidelines*

#### **About**

In an effort to encourage and promote fairness in journalism, the Minnesota News Council is pleased to announce the establishment of the Rasmussen Family Fairness Award. This prize, which will be awarded annually in January at the Minnesota Newspaper Association Convention, honors fair and balanced journalism. Specifically, the award is presented for fair and balanced reporting on serious social, governmental, political issues or other subjects of on-going, in-depth coverage.

Two winners are selected each year; an individual journalist for their work and a news organization for overall, on-going coverage of an issue. Winners are presented with a monetary award as well as a plaque.

#### **How to Apply**

The Minnesota News Council accepts nominations for a single article or editorial; series of stories or editorials; or a body of work by an individual journalist.

Anyone may submit a nomination by sending an application form to the address below, as well as 3 copies of the work and a letter of nomination explaining why the entry is an excellent example of fairness in journalism. The letter must explain how the work was developed, reported and presented to news consumers in the context of fairness. The letter should also explain how the publication itself defines fairness and how that was applied to the particular work – from brainstorming to final publication.

To be eligible for the inaugural 2010 award, the work must have been published in a Minnesota newspaper between Jan. 1, 2008 and Nov. 30, 2009. Entries must be postmarked by Dec. 11, 2009.

#### **Judging Guidelines**

The Minnesota News Council does not specifically define the term “fairness.” However, in the letter of nomination, applicants should explain and apply their own standards of fairness to their work. This self-examination is the most important aspect of the application. Judges will consider not only the final printed product, but how the story came about; the reporting and writing, as well as photos, graphics and headlines. The judges will look at the circumstances surrounding the publication of the story or stories and evaluate how the publication made fairness a priority.

#### **Submit Applications**

Rasmussen Family Fairness Award  
Minnesota News Council  
12 South Sixth Street, Suite 927  
Minneapolis, MN 55402

#### **Questions**

Please contact Sarah Bauer at the Minnesota News Council with any questions or concerns.

Email: [sarah.bauer@news-council.org](mailto:sarah.bauer@news-council.org)

Phone: 612-341-9357

***Entries must be postmarked by December 11, 2009.***



**First Annual Rasmussen Family Fairness Award**

*Entry Form*

Name of Newspaper: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Nominee (journalist or newspaper): \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Entry (single story or series): \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) of Publication: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Nominator: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Nominator: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Nominator: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number of Nominator: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address of Nominator: \_\_\_\_\_

If nominating a newspaper, please list the names and titles of journalists and staff who contributed to the entry (i.e. reporters, editors, photographers, designers, researchers, copy editors, etc.):

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

To enter the First Annual Rasmussen Family Fairness Award contest, please submit three copies of the following items: the entry form, the letter of nomination and the nominated work to the address below.

Rasmussen Family Fairness Award  
c/o The Minnesota News Council  
12 South Sixth Street, Suite 927  
Minneapolis, MN 55402

***Entries must be postmarked by December 11, 2009.***



## First Annual Rasmussen Family Fairness Award

### *Nomination Letter Guidelines*

The Nomination Letter is the most important piece of the award application. We ask you to thoughtfully consider the work being nominated in the context of fairness.

Some things to consider when writing your letter of nomination:

- In producing the work, did you specifically make fairness a priority?
- Define your standards of fairness and how they were applied to the work.
- Was the issue reported a controversial one? How does your work exemplify fair treatment of a difficult subject to report?
- How did your story come about? Tell us how you framed the story, and the important issues considered and discussed by staff.
- Does your work address serious social, cultural, governmental, political issues or other subjects of on-going, in-depth coverage? What makes these subjects challenging to cover? How do you tell complete, balanced stories?
- What were the unique circumstances surrounding the publication of this story or stories?
- Was this story more difficult to tell than others? If so, why?

Judges will consider not only the final printed product, but how the story came about; the reporting and writing, as well as photos, graphics and headlines. The judges will look at the circumstances surrounding the publication of the story or stories and evaluate how the publication made fairness a priority.