

Aggie Student Broadcasters Continue Winning Tradition in SPJ Competition

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04/01/2020



Student Zach Aedo riding with 'Bycycle' Brent during a story.

Utah State University's Journalism and Communication broadcast students were recognized for their excellent reporting by the Society of Professional Journalists, continuing a tradition of award-winning work by student broadcasters in the [Department of Journalism and Communication](#).

The national organization sponsors the annual Mark of Excellence Awards that draws in universities across the nation. USU competes in a region made up of Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, and Wyoming. Competitors within Utah itself include the University of Utah and Brigham Young University. National awards will be announced later this spring.

Broadcast news and feature journalists' work was especially strongly, sweeping the category of Television In-Depth Reporting. The staff of Cache Rendezvous was top in Best All-Around Television News Magazine category, winning for the episode titled "The Last Spike."

Among their proudest advocates is Brian Champagne, a JCOM associate professor of professional practice. "It's great to see the students getting recognition for their hard work," he said. The students, he added, undertook "hours of research, planning, shooting, and editing."

Broadcast students also rely on Christopher Garff, a professional practice assistant professor who teaches

video and broadcast news, as well as multi-media courses. He advises A-TV News, the student-run weekly news report.

The young broadcaster who took many of the awards was Zachary Aedo. He graduated in 2019 and is now a news anchor and reporter for Colorado Springs' KRDO TV station.

Unfortunately, this year's awards came in the form of printed certificates sent via the U.S. Postal Service, unlike the awards ceremonies of past years.

Aggie award winners in television broadcasting were:

Television In-Depth Reporting

- **Winner:** "Railroad's Impact on Agriculture," Corryn La Rue and Christy Achen
- **Finalist:** "Railroad's Impact on Archaeology," Zachary Aedo
- **Finalist:** "Railroad's Impact on Utah," Zachary Aedo

Television Breaking News Reporting

- **Winner:** "Campus Gas Leak," Zachary Aedo

Television General News Reporting

- **Finalist:** "ROTC-AF 24-Hour Veterans Day Vigil," by Brandon Dean and Kendall Douglass

Television Feature Reporting

- **Winner:** "Bicycle Brent," Zachary Aedo
- **Finalist:** "Choosing a Christmas Tree," Austin Elder

Best All-Around Television News Magazine

- **Winner:** "The Last Spike," staff of Cache Rendezvous

Broadcast News Videography

- **Winner:** "Bike Park Opens," Brandon Dean
- **Finalist:** "Saving a Granary," Shae Densley

Broadcast Feature Videography

- **Finalist:** "Healing on Horseback," Shae Densley

Television Sports Reporting

- **Winner:** "Trash Car Racing," Adam Larson

- **Finalist:** *“Street Snowboarding,”* McKay Jensen

Magazine

- **Finalist:** *“Putting Portugal Basketball on the Map,”*
by Sydney Kidd