

2026 Azbee Awards of Excellence

Central Region Award Winners

(Alphabetical by publication name)

Baking & Snack (Sosland Publishing)

Category: Design - Publication Redesign

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: Baking & Snack Publication Redesign

James Boddicker, Publisher; Charlotte Atchley, Editor; Keith Moore, Managing Editor; Elisabeth Spillman, Design Services Manager; Brian Peterman, Senior Graphic Designer

Beyond the Meeting Room (Associated Luxury Hotels International)

Category: All Content - Feature Article, *Industry*

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: The Store of Hope and Dignity

Rich Luna, Editor

Category: All Content - Feature Series

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: Beyond the Meeting Room

Rich Luna, Editor; Justin Armbrurger, Creative Director; Maria Lenhart, Writer; Mark Ray, Writer

Category: Design - Publication Design

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: Beyond the Meeting Room

Justin Armbrurger, Creative Director; Rich Luna, Editor

Category: Online - Podcast

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: ALHI Beyond the Meeting Room Podcast

Rachelle Simon, Director of Marketing; Michael Dominguez, President & CEO

Category: Print - State of the Industry

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: Beyond the Meeting Room

Rich Luna, Editor; Justin Armbrurger, Creative Director

Broadband Communities (Terrapinn Holdings LTD)

Category: Online - Online Single Topic Coverage, *Industry*

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: The Trashing the Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) Program

Steven S. Ross, Editor-at-Large; Brad Randall, Editor-in-Chief

Commercial Baking (Avant Food Media)

Category: All Content - Group Recognition Program

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: Industry Innovators

Avant Food Media

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EMS1 (Lexipol)

Category: Online - Podcast

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: Rainn Wilson on 'Code 3' and the brutal beauty of EMS life
Rob Lawrence, Host; Kerri Hatt, Editor-in-Chief; Rainn Wilson, Actor

FireRescue1 (Lexipol)

Category: All Content - Government Coverage

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: Government Decisions That Shape the Fire Service

Marc Bashoor, Senior Advisor; Janelle Foskett, Editor-in-Chief; Rachel Engel, Senior Editor; Bill Carey, Assistant Editor; Sarah Roebuck, News Editor

Category: Online - Breaking News Coverage

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: National Fire Academy Training Cancellations

Dr. Lori Moore-Merrell, Chief; Josh Waldo, Chief; Marc Bashoor; Aaron Zamzow; Janelle Foskett, Editor-in-Chief; Rachel Engel, Senior Editor; Bill Carey, Assistant Editor; Sarah Roebuck, News Editor

Health Progress (Catholic Health Association of the United States)

Category: All Content - Enterprise News Story

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: Accountable Care Organizations Save Billions, But Struggles Remain in the Shift to Value-Based Care

Kelly Bilodeau, Contributor

Category: Print - Special Section

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: Health Care Across America

Betsy Taylor, Editor; Charlotte Kelley, Managing Editor; Norma Klingsick, Lead Designer; and Special Section Contributors

Meat + Poultry (Sosland Publishing)

Category: Design - Front Cover Design

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: Leg Days - Meat + Poultry December 2025 Cover

Dave Crost, Publisher; Joel Crews, Editor; Erica Schaffer, Managing Editor; Bob Sims, Features Editor; Ryan McCarthy & Rachael Oatman, Digital Media; Fiona Danker, Senior Graphic Designer

MESSENGER (Modern Storage Media)

Category: Online - Best Conversion from Print to Web

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: MSM

Poppy Behrens, Publisher; Jim Nissen, Creative Director; Lauri Longstrom-Henderson, Sales & Marketing; Erica Shatzer, Editor; Brad Hadfield, Lead Writer; Travis M. Morrow, CEO, Storelocal Media Corp

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PAYTECH (PayrollOrg)

Category: Print - Special Section

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: "The Future of Payroll Is Here" AI/RPA Technology Special Section

PAYO's Membership Publications Department; Christine L. Avery, Director; Tracy Cole, Manager; Bryan Kirk, Senior Writer/Editor; Sean Tait Bircher, Writer/Editor; Raul Plata, Jr., Editorial Assistant

Police1 (Lexipol)

Category: Online - Online Single Topic Coverage, *Industry*

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: Women in Law Enforcement

Nancy Perry, Director of Content, Law Enforcement and Corrections; Sarah Calams, Senior Editor

Category: Online - Video Series

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: The Brief: Wellness Edition video series

Emily Hitchings, Programming Director, Counselor; Greg Friese, Editorial Director; Adam Brower, Videographer/Editor

POWER magazine (Access Intelligence)

Category: All Content - Impact/Investigative

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: Out of Sync: The Infrastructure Misalignment Undermining the U.S. Grid
Sonal Patel, Senior Editor

PPAI Media (PPAI)

Category: All Content - Government Coverage

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: Government Actions Impacting The Promotional Products Industry

John Corrigan, Deputy Editor; Rachel Zoch, Public Affairs Manager; Jonny Auping, Senior News Editor; Alok Bhat, Research and Public Affairs Lead; Josh Ellis, Editor in Chief

Category: All Content - Group or Company Profile

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: Spectrum Designs: Very Welcome

Josh Ellis, Publisher and Editor in Chief

Category: Online - Online Single Topic Coverage, *Association*

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: Tariff Turmoil In The Promotional Products Industry

John Corrigan, Deputy Editor; Jonny Auping, Senior News Editor; Rachel Zoch, Public Affairs Manager; Alok Bhat, Research & Public Affairs Lead; Josh Ellis, Publisher & Editor in Chief

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State Legislatures Magazine (National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL))

Category: Print - Special Issue or Supplement

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: 50th Anniversary Edition: Strengthening States for Five Decades

Lisa Ryckman, Associate Director of Communications; Steve Miller, Associate Director/Design; Kevin Frazzini, Senior Editor

Supermarket Perimeter (Sosland Publishing)

Category: Design - Best Original Illustration

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: Everyday a Micro Holiday - April 2025 Supermarket Perimeter

Troy Ashby, Publisher; Andy Nelson, Managing Editor; Hayley Hyer, Digital Media Associate Editor; Elisabeth Spillman, Design Manager; Fiona Danker, Senior Graphic Designer; Louise Garbs, Illustrator

T&D World (Endeavor Business Media)

Category: All Content - Impact/Investigative

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: Prioritizing the Mental Health of First Responders

Amy Fischbach, Head of Content, T&D World

Category: All Content - Industry News Coverage

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: Why Transformer Shortages Signal Bigger Challenges for U.S. Reshoring Efforts, Rising Electricity Costs and the Impact on American Households and Could AI Find Its Limit in the Power Grid?

Jeff Postelwait, Managing Editor, T&D World

tED magazine (National Association of Electrical Distributors (NAED))

Category: Design - Best Design for a Single Issue

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: Promoting the Industry

Randi Vincent, Art Director; Scott Costa, Publisher; Misty Byers, Editor; Karen Linehan, Production Editor

Category: Design - Front Cover Design

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: Tech Can't Do It All

Randi Vincent, Art Director; Scott Costa, Publisher; Misty Byers, Editor; Karen Linehan, Production Editor

Category: Design - Opening Page/Spread Design

Award: Regional Gold Award

Title of Entry: Tech Can't Do It All

Randi Vincent, Art Director; Scott Costa, Publisher; Misty Byers, Editor; Karen Linehan, Production Editor

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tED magazine (National Association of Electrical Distributors (NAED))

Category: Design - Publication Design

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: Best of the Best & Cracking the Talent Code

Randi Vincent, Art Director; Scott Costa, Publisher; Misty Byers, Editor; Karen Linehan, Production Editor

Category: Online - Podcast

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: DistributED with tED magazine Podcast

Scott Costa, Publisher

The Meeting Professional (Meeting Professionals International)

Category: Design - Best Design for a Single Issue

Award: Regional Bronze Award

Title of Entry: MPI - Best Design for a Single Issue

Jeff Daigle, Blair Potter, Michael Pinchera, Hamilton Hedrick, Morganne Stewart, Sherry Gritch

Category: Design - Publication Design

Award: Regional Silver Award

Title of Entry: MPI - Publication Design

Jeff Daigle, Blair Potter, Michael Pinchera, Hamilton Hedrick, Morganne Stewart, Sherry Gritch