



Maj. Gen. Keith L. Ware Communications Awards

2026-27 Competition

Department of the Army
Army Communications and Outreach Office



U.S. ARMY

I. Summary of Change

- Minor corrections to *Competition Timeline*
- No changes to category requirements

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II. Competition Overview

The MG Keith L. Ware (KLW) Communication Award Competition recognizes Soldiers and Department of the Army (DA) Civilians for excellence in achieving Army communication and public affairs objectives. On behalf of the Secretary of the Army, the Army Communications and Outreach Office (ACOO) conducts the competition annually to recognize, cultivate and inspire excellence within the Army public affairs (PA) and visual information (VI) communities.

The competition includes the SGM Dawn Kilpatrick Memorial AUSA Scholarship. This standard operating procedure (SOP) establishes competition criteria and provides the Army with guidance for recognizing the most notable work of its communication professionals. In addition, information for the SGM Dawn Kilpatrick Memorial AUSA Scholarship can be found in Part XII Award Categories: Category N. This SOP applies to the Active Army, Army National Guard and the Army Reserve unless otherwise stated. All competing personnel should read through this SOP in its entirety.

Point of Contact

The proponent of this SOP is ACOO. The preparing agency is the Army Communications and Outreach Office. Send comments and recommendations to the Army Communications and Outreach Office by e-mail to mary.e.ferguson40.mil@army.mil. The approval and exception to policy authority for this contest and SOP is SGM Mary Ferguson, ACOO SGM.

The Department of the Army KLW point of contact is SGM Mary Ferguson at mary.e.ferguson40.mil@army.mil.

III. Competition Timeline

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17, 2026

SOP Launch

MONDAY, JUNE 22, 2026

Session 1: June 30, 2026 1000 to 1100 EST [MS Teams link](#)

Session 2: June 30, 2026 1600 to 1700 EST [MS Teams link](#)

JANUARY 1 – DECEMBER 31, 2026

Production dates for materials entered into the 2026-27 competition

NLT JANUARY 22, 2027

ACOM, ASCC, DRU competitions complete

NLT JANUARY 29, 2027

All entries, including SGM Dawn Kilpatrick Memorial AUSA Scholarship nominations, due to HQDA

FEBRUARY 1-12, 2027

KLW judging by DA panelists

NLT FEBRUARY 16, 2027

KLW results and SGM Dawn Kilpatrick Memorial AUSA Scholarship recipient announced

OCTOBER 2027

SGM Dawn Kilpatrick Memorial AUSA Scholarship recipient recognized at a ceremony conducted during the AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition in Washington, D.C.

IV. ELIGIBILITY

A. General Guidelines

1. The competition is open to Soldiers, NCOs, Officers and Civilian who are qualified to serve within the CMF46 enlisted career field, FA46 officer functional area and Army PA/VI civilian workforce (see each individual category for specific information on eligibility and ranks).
2. Personnel currently assigned to Stars & Stripes are ineligible for the KLW competition. Work produced in the contest year prior to or following a Stars & Stripes assignment remains eligible.
3. Personnel assigned to the Army Communications and Outreach Office (ACOO), Army Reserve Command and the National Guard Bureau are eligible to submit in all categories.
4. Soldiers who transition out of government service may compete as long as the material submitted was completed in its entirety while on active duty or in a Reserve or National Guard status.
5. Army Reserve, National Guard and Reserve Officer Training Corps personnel are eligible to compete in all categories provided they meet category qualifications.
6. Forward Army Reserve entries to MSG Crystal Harlow of U.S. Army Reserve Command – crystal.l.harlow2.mil@army.mil or (910) 570-8330.
7. Forward National Guard entries to SMSgt Sarah Mattison of the National Guard Bureau – sarah.e.mattison4.mil@army.mil or (703) 607-2638.
8. Forward ROTC entries to Ms. Christina Bhatti of USAREC. Ms. Bhatti can be reached at christina.m.bhatti.civ@army.mil or (502) 624-4904.

B. Public Affairs Liaisons (historically known as Unit Public Affairs Representatives)

1. Liaisons are eligible to submit in the Public Affairs Liaison of the Year category through their higher echelon PAO, as outlined AR 360-1.

C. Government Contract Employees and Korean Augmentees (KATUSAs)

1. Government contract employees and Korean Augmentees to the U.S. Army (KATUSAs) are not eligible to compete in civilian categories.

D. Local National Employees

1. Local national employees are not eligible to compete in civilian categories at the DA level but can still be recognized in Major Command or regional competitions.

V. STANDARDS FOR ENTRY

- A. Any person, military or civilian, who has received, is pending or under administrative actions, or is pending or under civilian legal actions during the competition year, is ineligible to compete in that same calendar year.
- B. Soldiers flagged for misconduct are ineligible to compete in the competition. Soldiers flagged at any point from the judging period to the presentation are ineligible to receive the award. Command's point of contact are responsible for informing the HQDA KLW POC of any change in status.
- C. Soldiers must submit a valid DA 705 and associated DA 5500/5501 from calendar year 2026 with entry to any category. These forms will be sent by their Major Command awards representative to the HQDA KLW POC.
- D. **Selecting a winner is the organization's certification that the individual meets all eligibility requirements.**

- E. The following products are ineligible: Civilian Enterprise Guides and Directories, yearbooks, publications and productions funded by non-appropriated funds; educational, training and motivational videos or films.

VI. WINNER INFORMATION

- A. Each category will have one winner selected.
- B. ACOO will process and mail awards to all first-place winners. All ACOM/ ASCC and DRU KLW POCs are encouraged to recognize second and third place winners through local command channels.
- C. Rank and names will appear on awards as they appear on the submission log as pulled directly from the DVIDS awards module. To avoid errors, entrants and ACOM, ASCC and DRU POCs will ensure information in DVIDS is correct. Do not use organizational nicknames or acronyms.
- D. Responsibility for certificate, citation and administrative errors resulting from late, incomplete or incorrect information rests solely with the organizations and their headquarters.

VII. ENTRY CRITERIA AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

- A. Products submitted to the competition must have been created, approved for public release, and in line with category requirements published to DVIDS between Jan. 1, 2026, and 11:59 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on Dec. 31, 2026.
- B. All products must support or contribute to organizational communication objectives and meet the highest standards of production, execution and professional excellence. Products must convey, by content and delivery, relevant information that supports the command's information and/or mission needs and, therefore, must be authorized products approved for public release.
- C. No single product may be entered more than once (Categories O and Q are the only exception, see Page 24). If duplicate products are discovered, the submitting command will not be allowed to replace the duplicated product nor will they be allowed to submit a replacement entry.
- D. The entrant is also eligible to enter only one additional category (either the graphic designer, photographer, videographer or writer of the year categories) during the same competition year. Products may not be used more than once per paragraph C of this section. Entries found to contain the same products will be disqualified from the Army Communicator of the Year and the other "of the year" categories.
- E. Individuals who are not entering a Communicator of the Year category may enter more than one of the following categories: graphic designer, photographer, videographer or writer of the year. Products may not be used more than once per paragraph C of this section. Entries found to contain the same products will be disqualified from all categories.
- F. Each entry requires multiple products highlighting the entrant's work. In order to create the entry, each product must be uploaded and published to DVIDS as a separate file.
- G. Each graphic, photo or video product must contain an embedded caption and other required metadata. Also, be assign a Visual Information Record Identification Number (VIRIN) as required in the DoD Visual Information Style Guide and Change 2 to DoD

- Instruction 5040.02, “Visual Information,” dated April 23, 2018. List the person who created the product in the credit field and ensure their name is included in the caption.
- H. All products must comply with federal law and DoD policy. See Appendix A.
 - I. National Guard or Reserve members that also fill DoD civilian public affairs positions are allowed to submit separate products done in their two different capacities. These personnel may not submit mixed products from military and civilian status to compete in a category. For example, if the product is authored by Sgt. XXXX, that product is eligible for military categories only. The same rule applies for products created in civilian status.
 - J. Reasons for disqualification or rejection
 1. Products entered by personnel who do not meet eligibility requirements listed in Section IV.
 2. Products that do not meet the specific requirements listed in Section VII or Appendix C or fail to follow federal law or established DoD policy.
 3. Individual products with more than one name in a byline or credit line.
 4. Products containing copyright protected or licensed music, video or graphics unless clarified in the caption. Individual or personal licenses may not be used in accordance with DoD policy. Authorized licenses must be notated in DVIDS caption.
 5. Entries that do not meet the SOP requirements for that category
 - K. Entry to the KLW Awards categories A-L requires submission of the **KLW Entry Form** (see Appendix F). See instructions below:
 1. Upload and publish products throughout the **2026 calendar year** to DVIDS at <https://www.dvidshub.net/>.
 2. Fill out the required admin data in Page 1 of the **KLW Entry Form**.
 3. Add the full DVIDS URL for the products required of the category you are entering on Page 2 of the **KLW Entry Form**.
 4. E-mail your completed **KLW Entry Forms** to your **Major Command KLW POC**.
 5. Entries to **categories M-S** are sent via email to your **Major Command KLW POC** with all required documents in a single PDF. File name will contain category and entrant name. Ex: CAT_S_USARPAC_FERGUSON. MACOM’s will ensure eligibility requests are met; then forward ALL entries to HQDA KLW POC. No MACOM level judging.

VIII. COMMAND COMPETITION CRITERIA

- A. Only ACOMs, ASCCs, DRUs and units listed in Appendix B are eligible to host a command-level competition and only those point of contacts will submit entries in categories A-to the DA-level. The winners of these command competitions will move on to the HQDA level for judging. Command level winners’ entries must be forwarded to HQDA KLW POC before the deadlines listed on Page 6.
- B. MACOMs are the lowest level for KLW competitions.**
- C. ACOMs, ASCCs, DRUs may submit three entries in each category for categories A-L.
- D. Units included in the Army Transformation Initiative (ATI) will continue to submit through the same MACOM workflow that was used before ATI.

- E. Submissions to categories M-S are sent directly to MACOM's POC for requirement screening only then forward onto HQDA.
- F. No individual may enter categories A-L directly. Individuals must enter through their respective ACOM, ASCC or DRU competition. Entries may only be submitted through one command.
- G. PA and VI personnel assigned to the Pentagon working in ACOO and its regional offices, Army Photo, Army Multimedia and Visual Information Directorate or in a public affairs capacity for senior Army leadership (SECARMY, SMA, etc.) will submit through the Military District of Washington.
- H. Personnel who transition to another unit during the contest year may submit individual work produced for a previous organization through their new command.

IX. JUDGING GUIDANCE

- A. Judging panels comprise of CMF/46 46A/CP 22 officers, senior noncommissioned officers, and DA civilians. Contractors and other non-government employees will not be included in judging panels.
- B. Decisions from the judging panels are reviewed by the Chief of Public Affairs, who retains discretion for final approval, as well as authority for release of contest information and results.
- C. All entries will be judged holistically on professional excellence, communication impact, originality, and caption quality. Judges' decisions are final.
- D. Judges will select only one winner in each category. If no entry in a category is considered within contest standards, judges may choose to withhold any award within that category.
- E. Entrant of a category may NOT be a judge in the same category. When practical, supervisors may NOT judge a category in which subordinates have entered.
- F. Judges will use word pictures for each category to score entries. The link can be found here: https://www.army.mil/e2/downloads/rv7/klw/admin/klw_scoring_guidance.pdf

X. AWARD CATEGORIES

Category A: Soldier Communicator of the Year

1. **Open to enlisted Soldiers up to Sgt. 1st Class** who meet eligibility criteria listed in Section V and VI. Entry must be a portfolio profiling the work credited to one individual. Products with more than one name in a byline or credit line will be disqualified.
2. Submit entry using the **KLW Entry Form** (see Appendix F).
3. Submissions must include a valid DA 705 and associated DA 5500/5501 from 2026, sent from command awards POC to HQDA KLW POC.
4. Entry will consist of five products (refer to Appendix C for product descriptions):
5. One print story (must be either a commentary, feature story, information story or one story of a series).
6. One video story.
7. One photo (must be either a news photo, feature photo, portrait or one photo from a photo series).
8. Two products of the candidate's choice.
9. Other criteria:
 - a. Only one of the candidate's choices may be a photojournalism product (3-5 photos and a story), but it must be on a topic or event different from the other products entered. Only one photojournalism product may be entered as part of the entry.
 - b. None of the candidate's choices may be a photo series.
 - c. Do not extract and submit component elements of a product as a candidate's choice if that product in its entirety is being submitted by the entrant to this or another category. This rule, however, does not prohibit individuals from submitting a graphic element extracted from a team-produced video, a multimedia product or a video credited to another person, but the extracted element must be the work of the entrant, and it must have been uploaded and published to DVIDS as a separate file.
 - d. ***Music used in videos must be licensed through a unit subscription, or with written consent from the artist. This licensing information must be annotated in the DVIDS caption. Individual licenses are not authorized for DVIDS products and could result in the upload being taken down.***

Category B: Civilian Communicator of the Year

1. **Open to civilians up to GS-12** who meet eligibility criteria listed in Section V. Entry must be a portfolio profiling the work credited to one individual. Products with more than one name in a byline or credit line will be disqualified.
2. Submit entry using the KLW Entry Form (see Appendix F).
3. Entry will consist of five products (refer to Appendix C for product descriptions):
4. One print story (must be either a commentary, feature story, information story or one story of a series).
5. One video story.
6. One photo (must be either a news photo, feature photo, portrait or one photo from a photo series).
7. Two products of the candidate's choice.
8. Other criteria:
 - a. Only one of the candidate's choices may be a photojournalism product (3-5 photos and a story), but it must be on a topic or event different from the other products in the entry. Only one photojournalism product may be entered as part of the entry.
 - b. None of the candidate's choices may be a photo series.
 - c. Do not extract and submit component elements of a product as a candidate's choice if that product in its entirety is being submitted by the entrant to this or another category. This rule, however, does not prohibit individuals from submitting a graphic element extracted from a team-produced video, a multimedia product or a video credited to another person, but the extracted element must be the work of the entrant, and it must have been uploaded and published to DVIDS as a separate file.
 - d. ***Music used in videos must be licensed through a unit subscription, or with written consent from the artist. This licensing information must be annotated in the DVIDS caption. Individual licenses are not authorized for DVIDS products and could result in the upload being taken down.***

Category C: Civilian Graphic Designer of the Year

1. **Open to civilians up to GS-12** who meet eligibility criteria listed in Section V. Entry must be a portfolio profiling the work credited to one individual. Products with more than one name in a byline or credit line will be disqualified.
2. Entry must be the work of one individual. Products with more than one name in the credit line will be disqualified.
3. Submit entry using the **KLW Entry Form** (see Appendix F).
4. Entry must consist of six graphic design products:
 - a. One layout & design product.
 - b. One digital art product.
 - c. Four graphic design products of the candidate's choice. Refer to Appendix C for product descriptions.
5. Other requirements:
 - a. Do not submit two-dimensional work created by free-hand methods using dry- or wet-based methods, such as line art, sketches, watercolors and/or oil paintings, and work created using pencil, chalk and/or charcoal; pictures of displays; and fine art pieces.
 - b. Do not extract and submit component elements of a multimedia product, video story or video spot as one of the six graphic design products if the multimedia product, video story or video spot in its entirety is being submitted by the entrant to another category. This does not prohibit individuals from extracting a graphic element they created for a team-produced product, or a product credited to another individual, but the extracted element must be the work of the entrant.
 - c. Do not extract and submit component elements from a layout & design product as a separate product if the layout & design product in its entirety is being entered by the entrant to this or another category. Conversely, do not enter a layout & design product that contains elements submitted as digital art and identity design products. Each product must be separate and distinct from the other.
 - d. Do not submit layouts from interactive publications or interactive PDF documents.

Category D: Military Graphic Designer of the Year

1. **Open to enlisted Soldiers through Sgt. 1st Class** who meet eligibility criteria listed in Section V and VI.
2. Entry must be the work of one individual. Products with more than one name in the credit line will be disqualified.
3. Submissions must include a valid DA 705 and associated DA 5500/5501 from 2026, sent from command awards POC to HQDA KLW POC.
4. Submit entry using the KLW Entry Form (see Appendix F).
5. Entry must consist of six graphic design products (refer to Appendix C for product descriptions):
 - a. One layout & design product.
 - b. One digital art product.
 - c. Four graphic design products of the candidate's choice.
6. Other requirements:
 - a. Do not submit two-dimensional work created by free-hand methods using dry- or wet-based methods, such as line art, sketches, watercolors and/or oil paintings, and work created using pencil, chalk and/or charcoal; pictures of displays; and fine art pieces.
 - b. Do not extract and submit component elements of a multimedia product, video story or video spot as one of the six graphic design products if the multimedia product, video story or video spot in its entirety is being submitted by the entrant to another category. This does not prohibit individuals from extracting a graphic element they created for a team-produced product, or a product credited to another individual, but the extracted element must be the work of the entrant.
 - c. Do not extract and submit component elements from a layout & design product as a separate product if the layout & design product in its entirety is being entered by the entrant to this or another category. Conversely, do not enter a layout & design product that contains elements submitted as digital art and identity design products. Each product must be separate and distinct from the other.
 - d. Do not submit layouts from interactive publications or interactive PDF documents.

Category E: Civilian Photographer of the Year

1. **Open to civilians up to GS-12** who meet eligibility criteria listed in Section V.
2. Entry must be the work of one individual. Products with more than one name in the credit line will be disqualified.
3. Submit entry using the KLW Entry Form (see Appendix F).
4. Portfolio must contain seven photo products (refer to Appendix C for product descriptions):
 - a. One news photo.
 - b. One feature photo.
 - c. One portrait.
 - d. Three photos of the candidate's choice.
 - e. One photo series consisting of at least seven, but no more than 12 photos.
5. Entry must contain 13 to 18 images in total.
6. Other requirements:
 - a. Follow entry criteria listed in Section V.
 - b. Submit only one photo series.
 - c. Photo illustrations are not authorized.
 - d. Do not submit a photojournalism product as a candidate's choice.
 - e. Do not extract photos from a multimedia product or other video product and enter them as a portrait, news photo, feature photo, or any candidate's choice photo if the multimedia product or video is submitted as part of another category.
 - f. Do not submit the same photo more than once. Do not enter the same photo from the photo series as a portrait, news photo, feature photo, or any candidate's choice photo. This rule does not prevent submission of a different photo from that same operation as a portrait, news photo, feature photo, or any candidate's choice photo. The purpose of the entry is to demonstrate one's ability to take photos in a variety of settings. Therefore, products from more than one operation or event earn higher scores.

Category F: Spc. Hilda I. Clayton Military Photographer of the Year

1. **Open to enlisted Soldiers through Sgt. 1st Class** who meet eligibility criteria listed in Section V and VI.
2. Spc. Hilda I. Clayton was a combat camera Soldier assigned to 55th Combat Camera Company. She died on July 2, 2013, from wounds sustained while providing combat camera support during an Afghan National Army training exercise in Qaraghahi, Afghanistan.
3. Entry must be the work of one individual. Products with more than one name in the credit line will be disqualified.
4. Submissions must include a valid DA 705 and associated DA 5500/5501 from 2026, sent from command awards POC to HQDA KLW POC.
5. Submit entry as using the **KLW Entry Form** (see Appendix F).
6. Portfolio must contain six photo products (refer to Appendix C for product descriptions):
 - a. One feature photo.
 - b. One portrait (see Appendix C for definition).
 - c. Three photos of the candidate's choice.
 - d. One photo series consisting of at least seven, but no more than 12 photos.
7. Other requirements:
 - a. Submit only one photo series.
 - b. Photo illustrations are not authorized.
 - c. Do not submit a photojournalism product as a candidate's choice.
 - d. Do not extract photos from a multimedia product or other video product and enter them as a portrait, news photo, feature photo, or any candidate's choice photo if the multimedia product or video is submitted as part of another category.
 - e. Do not submit the same photo more than once. Do not enter the same photo from the photo series as a portrait, news photo, feature photo, or any candidate's choice photo. This rule does not prevent submission of a different photo from that same operation as a portrait, news photo, feature photo, or any candidate's choice photo. The purpose of the portfolio is to demonstrate one's ability to take photos in a variety of settings. Therefore, products from more than one operation or event earn higher scores.

Category G: Clark Taylor Civilian Videographer of the Year

1. **Open to civilians up to GS-12** who meet eligibility criteria listed in Section V.
2. A former infantryman who served in the Vietnam War, Mr. Clark Taylor was also the first enlisted station manager in American Forces Network Europe. As a civilian employee Mr. Taylor helped develop Soldiers Radio and Television and pioneered civilian distribution of Army news products.
3. Entry must be the work of one individual. Products with more than one person listed in the credit line will be disqualified.
4. Submit entry using the **KLW Entry Form** (see Appendix F).
5. Entry must contain four video products (refer to Appendix C for product descriptions):
 - a. One b-roll video.
 - b. One video story.
 - c. Two products of the candidate's choice, either a video story, multimedia product, video spot, or one video from a video series. A video designed exclusively for use on a social media platform may also be entered as a candidate's choice.
6. Other requirements:
 - a. Follow entry criteria listed in Section V.
 - b. A b-roll video package may not be submitted as a candidate's choice however, a portion of the b-roll may be used to create the candidate's choice products (e.g. video story, multimedia product... etc.)
 - c. Slates are not required.
 - d. Videos may contain closed captions, but they are not required.
 - e. ***Music used in videos must be licensed through a unit subscription, or with written consent from the artist. This licensing information must be annotated in the DVIDS caption. Individual licenses are not authorized for DVIDS products and could result in the upload being taken down.***

Category H: Master Sgt. John T. Anderson Military Videographer of the Year

1. **Open to enlisted Soldiers through Sgt. 1st Class** who meet eligibility criteria listed in Section V and VI.
2. Master Sgt. John T. Anderson had a long career with Armed Forces Radio and Television Service, with postings around the world. He was captured by the North Vietnamese while serving as the NCOIC of the American Forces Vietnam Detachment 5 in Hue. After five years as a Prisoner of War, he was released in March 1973 and later continued his Army service as a civilian.
3. Entry must be the work of one individual. Products with more than one person listed in the credit line will be disqualified.
4. Submissions must include a valid DA 705 and associated DA 5500/5501 from 2026, sent from command awards POC to HQDA KLW POC.
5. Submit entry using the KLW Entry Form (see Appendix F).
6. Entry must contain four video products (refer to Appendix C for product descriptions):
 - a. One b-roll video.
 - b. One video story.
 - c. Two products of the candidate's choice, either a video story, multimedia product, video spot, or one video from a video series. A video designed exclusively for use on a social media platform may also be entered as a candidate's choice.
7. Other requirements:
 - a. A b-roll video package may not be submitted as a candidate's choice however, a portion of the b-roll may be used to create the candidate's choice products (e.g. video story, multimedia product... etc.)
 - b. Slates are not required.
 - c. Videos may contain closed captions, but they are not required.
 - d. ***Music used in videos must be licensed through a unit subscription, or with written consent from the artist. This licensing information must be annotated in the DVIDS caption. Individual licenses are not authorized for DVIDS products and could result in the upload being taken down.***

Category I: Moss-Holland Civilian Writer of the Year

1. **Open to all DA 1035 civilians** who meet eligibility criteria listed in Section V.
2. John Moss and Peggy Holland were civilian Army Public Affairs employees with more than many years of experience. They were both working for the U.S. Army Recruiting Battalion inside the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City that was the site of a terrorist bombing in 1995. They were both killed in the terrorist bombing.
3. Entry must be work of one individual. Stories with more than one person listed in the byline will be disqualified.
4. Submit entry using the **KLW Entry Form** (see Appendix F).
5. Entry must contain five products (refer to Appendix C for product descriptions):
 - a. One information story.
 - b. One feature story.
 - c. Three stories of the candidate's choice, one of which may be a commentary.
6. Other requirements.
 - a. Products must be from separate events.
 - b. Upload each article as a separate story in DVIDS. Do not upload PDF files.

Category J: Staff Sgt. Paul D. Savanuck Military Writer of the Year

1. **Open to enlisted Soldiers through Sgt. 1st Class** who meet eligibility criteria listed in Sections V and VI.
2. Paul D. Savanuck was a senior at the University of Maryland who dropped out of school to enlist in the Army. After graduating from DINFOS, Savanuck covered the Vietnam War for Stars & Stripes Pacific. He was killed in combat on April 18, 1969, near Cam Lo, after putting down his camera and trying to aid wounded Soldiers.
3. Entry must be the work of one individual. Stories with more than one person listed in the byline will be disqualified.
4. Submissions must include a valid DA 705 and associated DA 5500/5501 from 2026, sent from command awards POC to HQDA KLW POC.
5. Submit entry using the KLW Entry Form (see Appendix F).
6. Entry must contain five products (refer to Appendix C for product descriptions):
 - a. One information story.
 - b. One feature story.
 - c. Three stories of the candidate's choice, one of which may be a commentary or photojournalism product.
7. Other requirements:
 - a. Products must be from separate events.
 - b. Upload each article as a separate story in DVIDS. Do not upload PDF files.

Category K: Staff Sgt. James P. Hunter Award for Outstanding New Military Writer

1. This one-time award recognizes excellence in Army writing among enlisted Soldiers with less than 24 months' time in the public affairs career field. Only Public Affairs Soldiers in the **rank of Sgt.(P) and below** before December 31, 2026, are eligible for this award. Soldiers must meet all standards in Sections V and VI.
2. This award is named in honor of Staff Sgt. James P. Hunter, who died in 2010 as he covered a combat patrol while serving with the 502nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division in Southern Afghanistan.
3. In addition to all eligibility requirements in Section V, Soldiers must also provide documentation of a 12-mile foot march with a 35-pound dry weight ruck sack, completed in less than three hours. This documentation can be either a memorandum signed by a Command Sergeant Major, or a grading sheet or certificate showing the foot march was completed during an Expert Soldier Badge qualification event. The foot march must be completed during the 2026 calendar year.
4. Additional tactical readiness requirements:
 - a. Valid DA 705 and associated DA 5500/5501 from the calendar year 2026.
 - b. Basic Rifle Qualification completed during 2026 calendar year.
 - c. Documentation of tactical readiness requirements can be submitted as either a properly signed Army form, or a grading sheet from an Expert Soldier Badge competition or a similar brigade or division-level Best Soldier/NCO competition.
 - d. Send documentation as a single PDF file to KLW POC. File name will contain category and entrant name. Ex: CAT_S_USARPAC_FERGUSON
5. Submit entry using the **KLW Entry Form** (see Appendix F).
6. The entry must contain five products (refer to Appendix C for product descriptions):
 - a. One information story.
 - b. Two feature stories.
 - c. Two additional stories of the candidate's choice, one of which may be a commentary or photojournalism product.
 - d. Submitted products must be from separate events.
 - e. Upload each article as a separate story in DVIDS. Do not upload PDF files.

Category L: Public Affairs Liaison of the Year

1. This award recognizes Soldiers that serve their commanders as a Public Affairs Liaison (historically known as Unit Public Affairs Representative). This category is open to non-Functional Area 46 officers in the rank of Cpt. (P) and below, and non-Public Affairs/non-Visual Information Soldiers in the rank of Sgt. 1st Class and below.
2. Submit entry using the KLW Entry Form (see Appendix D).
3. Individuals must meet all eligibility requirements outlined in Section VI.
4. Submissions must include a valid DA 705 and associated DA 5500/5501 from 2026, sent from command awards POC to HQDA KLW POC.
5. Entries into the Public Affairs Liaison of the Year will consist of four products:
 - a. One photo product.
 - b. One print story (can be Information, Feature, etc.).
 - c. Two products chosen by the next echelon of command's Public Affairs Office:
 - i. Video product.
 - ii. Graphic product.
 - iii. One additional photo
 - iv. One additional print story.

Category M: Public Affairs Officer "Rising Star" Award

1. This one-time award recognizes the top commissioned Army officer with less than 24 months of service in functional area 46.
2. Competitors must have completed all products through Dec. 31, 2026.
3. Individuals must meet all eligibility requirements outlined in Section VI, and either be a graduate of, or current student attending, the Public Affairs and Communication Strategy Qualification course (PACS-Q).
4. The complete entry will contain:
 - a. A nomination letter and an additional letter of recommendation. Individuals must be nominated by their higher military or civilian section OIC, Deputy PAO, PAO or commanding officer (**see template in Appendix D**). When nominated by anyone other than the PAO or commander, the letter of recommendation must be written by the officer's PAO or commander. Nominees must clearly exceed prescribed standards in public affairs areas and discuss the candidates in their totality, not simply their technical expertise.
 - b. Submissions must include a valid DA 705 and associated DA 5500/5501 from 2026, sent from command awards POC to HQDA KLW POC.
 - c. A memorandum from the responsible PAO confirming the nominee's eligibility. Additionally, the letter must confirm the work submitted is that of the officer nominated.
 - d. Examples of the officer's best work while serving in the career field. The entrant will choose two of the below categories to fulfill this requirement:
 - i. Communications Campaign Plan
 - ii. Single-Event Communication Strategy
 - iii. Public Affairs Guidance
5. The memorandums, and all other required paperwork must be scanned in or provided as one single PDF document. File name will contain category and entrant name. Ex: CAT_S_USARPAC_FERGUSON.
6. For more information contact SGM Mary Ferguson at mary.e.ferguson40.mil@army.mil.

Category N: Sgt. Maj. Dawn Kilpatrick Memorial AUSA Scholarship

1. In 1999, the Army and the Association of the United States Army formed a partnership as a tribute to Sergeant Major Dawn Kilpatrick and her 20 years of service to this nation. Kilpatrick served in a variety of positions, including Airborne positions, paving the way forward for not only public affairs Soldiers, but female service members as well. Kilpatrick was a master parachutist with more than 650 jumps to her credit. For two years, she was a member of the prestigious Golden Knights, the Army's parachute demonstration team. She died at her home in Herndon, Va., May 23, 1999, after a two-year battle with cervical cancer and just eight days after she retired. SGM Kilpatrick was laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery on May 27, 1999.
2. Army Public Affairs established an ongoing scholarship in her name -- The Sgt. Maj. Dawn Kilpatrick Memorial AUSA Scholarship. The recipients of this scholarship are NCOs who best exemplify the Army's vision, and influence others by shaping future leaders and practicing excellent stewardship of the nation's most precious resource - our Soldiers.
3. The scholarship allows mid-level and senior noncommissioned officers the opportunity to compete for an educational scholarship grant. This grant is intended to assist NCOs in achieving their educational goals. The Sgt. Maj. Dawn Kilpatrick Memorial AUSA Scholarship recipient receives a \$4,000.00 check for tuition assistance, books and fees associated with their educational experience.
4. To be considered, the NCO's leadership must submit the nomination by the application deadline. Specific requirements: must be in the Active component, Army Reserve or Army National Guard; a CMF 46 sergeant to sergeant major with less than 18 years of active service; hold a primary MOS of 46S, 46T, 46V, 46Y or 46Z; and, the NCO must be in an indefinite status or have at least 3 years remaining in service upon receipt of the scholarship.
5. To compete, Soldiers who meet the eligibility criteria must submit the following:
6. The Soldier Talent Profile (showing time in service remaining), a head and shoulders photo against a plain background or with the American flag, and copies of last two AFTs and last two NCOERs.
7. A supervisor's recommendation is required and is used for AUSA publicity of the scholarship and the Soldier. Supervisors should include how the nominee best exemplifies the Army's vision, cares for Soldiers, and works toward shaping our future leaders. The recommendation will address the NCO's leadership traits to include: responsibility, initiative, adaptability, competence and resilience.
8. A separate supervisor's memorandum is required, stating that the Soldier meets Army height and weight standards and is not flagged.
9. An endorsement memorandum from the first CMF 46 sergeant major in the nominee's chain of command is highly encouraged.
10. **A 1,000 word essay written by the nominee explaining the important role he/she plays as a keeper of the culture both in the Army Communication Community, and across our Army. Essay should include focus on a realistic plan for improving Warfighting and Communication cultures. See the essay grading rubric in Appendix E for more information.**
11. For application questions or submissions, contact the HQDA KLW POCs: SGM Mary Ferguson at mary.e.ferguson40.mil@army.mil.

Category O: Public Affairs Organization of the Year (Command Information)

1. This award honors the collaborative spirit and collective skills of Army Public Affairs units and sections, while reinforcing the importance of the Army narrative.
2. This is an organizational award and may include the collective work of one or more individuals. **Public affairs sections or units from echelons at two-star and below commands** (including SRC45 units and National Guard state offices) are eligible to compete. Army Service Component Command PA offices are not eligible.
3. Entries must be submitted as a single-file two-page PDF. Entry PDF file name should include entrant's unit name, command and category.
4. Entry must include a one-page executive summary signed by the commander, OIC or director of the organization that identifies the number of organic public affairs personnel assigned, explains how the products supported the higher command's communication priorities, and the Army's communication plan.
5. The entry will include five media products from any of the descriptions in Appendix C. If competing as a medium or large organization, each product must be credited to a different individual. Each required media product should be listed on a single page with its full title, upload date and DVIDS URL (**see template in Appendix D**). Products included in this portfolio may be submitted as individual category submissions as well.
6. Entries will be judged on the overall quality relative to the size of their organization and how they directly support command and Army communication priorities.
7. Category is awarded in three size division: **Small** – one to five personnel assigned; **Medium** – six to 15 personnel assigned; **Large** – 16 or more personnel assigned.
8. Entries will be e-mailed as a single PDF directly to HQDA KLW POC. File name will contain category, size division and unit name. Ex: CAT_O_MEDIUM_112MPAD
9. For more information contact SGM Mary Ferguson at mary.e.ferguson40.mil@army.mil.

Category P: Kathy Canham-Ross Organization of Distinction

1. This award recognizes a public affairs organization (of any echelon) that best exemplifies excellence in community engagement contributions.
2. The award is named for Kathy Canham-Ross, a distinguished director of OCPA-Los Angeles, who set an outstanding example to emulate throughout her 30 years as a PAO
3. Entries must be submitted as a 12-page (maximum) single-file PDF. File name will contain category and organization name. Ex: CAT_P_FTMCCOYPAO. A cover page and table of contents is required but will not count toward page limit.
4. The Kathy Canham-Ross Organization of Distinction entry will consist of 2 sections:
 - a. Community Engagement Program
 - b. Community Engagement Special Event
5. Each section will be supported by products showing the planning, execution, effectiveness and overall value to the Army:
 - a. Planning: describe the planning process, communication objectives, key findings and budget analysis, as appropriate.
 - b. Execution: provide details related to the execution of mission/program/event.
 - c. Effectiveness: describe the impact of the execution and what was measurably achieved.
 - d. Overall value to the Army: how did the larger organization or community benefit from the achievements and the programs/events they helped plan and execute?
6. Entries may be supported with internal and external media accounts, relevant feedback from participants, leaders and impacted members of the community. Don't include routine administrative documents or slide shows. Summarize internal coordination of necessary and appropriate in the Planning and Execution sections.
7. Entry must include one letter of endorsement:
 - a. One letter of endorsement from installation or major unit headquarters leader who is familiar with organizational community engagement operations and the personnel conducting them.
8. Entry must include a one-page executive summary highlighting the top overall accomplishments of the organization and how they impacted their unit/community. This can include details not covered in the two main sections of entry.
9. For more information contact SGM Mary Ferguson at mary.e.ferguson40.mil@army.mil.

Category Q: Digital Media Campaign of the Year

1. This award recognizes a team of public affairs/visual information professionals producing digital media products in support of a singular campaign.
2. Competitors must have completed all products through Dec. 31, 2026.
3. Individuals must meet all eligibility requirements outlined in Section V and can also include Public Affairs Liaisons. Up to five contributors will be recognized with the award.
4. A digital media team is defined as between 3 and 5 individuals working on a campaign, but do not have to be assigned to the same MTOE. There is no rank ceiling for any member of the team.
5. A campaign is defined as a focused topic, event or mission that requires a unified communication effort.
6. Digital media products are defined as visual information products produced primarily for release on social media platforms.
7. Products included in this portfolio may be submitted as individual category submissions as well.
8. The complete entry will contain:
 - a. A list of the campaign's significant contributors, one paragraph executive summary describing the campaign and the communication goals, and six social media products (including at least two videos) from the campaign, listed as clickable URLs (Page 1)
 - b. A two-paragraph AAR assessment of the digital campaign, and how the goals were met (Page 2).
9. Entries will be compiled into a single PDF and include category and unit name in file name, ex: CAT_Q_4IDPAO. Complete entries will be sent directly to HQDA KLW POC, mary.e.ferguson40.mil@army.mil.

Category R: Master Communicator of the Year

1. This one-time award recognizes a senior public affairs professional who best exemplifies the modern communicator in the strategic military environment.
2. This category is open to Senior NCOs (E7-E9), Officers (O5-O6) and DA Civilians (GS13-15) in the Army Public Affairs career field.
3. Individuals must meet all eligibility requirements outlined in Sections V and VI.
4. The complete entry will contain:
 - a. A letter of recommendation from the individual's Commander or Command Sgt. Maj., and an additional letter of recommendation. Additional letter of recommendation will be written by a communicator higher-ranking than the nominee, currently serving within the Army Public Affairs career field. Nominees must clearly exceed prescribed standards in public affairs areas and letters should discuss the candidates in their totality, not simply their technical expertise.
 - b. Military nominees must also submit a valid Army Fitness Test DA-705 from the 2026 calendar year.
 - c. A one-page executive summary written by the nominee describing two examples from 2026 epitomizing his/her skills as a master communicator. These examples can include assisting commanders in times of crisis, making an impact outside the chain of command, and contributing outside of his/her position to Army and Department of Defense messaging.
5. Entries will be compiled into a single PDF and include category and nominee in file name, ex: CAT_R_JONES. Complete entries will be sent directly to HQDA KLW POC, mary.e.ferguson40.mil@army.mil.

Category S: Operator-Maintainer of the Year

1. This award recognizes a 46T Soldier who exceeds the standards of their duty position and stands out among their peers.
2. This category is open to **Soldiers and NCOs through Staff Sgt.** with a PMOS of 46T – Visual Information Equipment Operator-Maintainer. Individuals must meet all standards in Section VI.
3. The complete entry will contain:
 - a. A letter of recommendation from the individual's first-line supervisor.
Nominees must clearly exceed prescribed technical standards and letters should discuss the candidates in their totality, not simply their technical expertise.
 - b. Military nominees must also submit a valid Army Fitness Test DA-705 and associated DA-5500 or DA-5501 from the 2026 calendar year.
 - c. A 750-word essay by the Soldier describing the impact and role he/she has in Army communication success, citing at least two examples of how his/her work has contributed to the mission in 2026.
4. Entries will be compiled into a single PDF with the file name containing the category and nominee, ex: CAT_S_JONES. Complete entries will be sent directly to HQDA KLW POC, mary.e.ferguson40.mil@army.mil.

XI. Army Public Affairs Hall of Fame

1. The U.S. Army Public Affairs Hall of Fame was established in 2000 to provide a lasting and visible means of honoring Army Public Affairs personnel who have made lasting and significant contributions to the Army Public Affairs profession. Additionally, through the achievements of inductees who have served during periods of conflict and peace, the Hall of Fame serves to educate the current generation of Public Affairs practitioners on the history of Army Public Affairs, inspiring them to build upon the achievements of these honored professionals.
2. On behalf of the Chief of Public Affairs, the Sergeant Major of Army Public Affairs manages the nomination and selection process. Nomination packets are accepted and voted throughout the calendar year. The Chief of Public Affairs notifies the inductees of their selection and then makes a public announcement.
3. Nominees must be prior military or government civilian U.S. Army Public Affairs professionals who have been retired from service within Army Public Affairs for at least three years. Nominees may still be serving in a different capacity within the Army or Federal Service. Nominations for deceased personnel are not bound by the three-year rule.
4. Nominees who did not retire from active federal service must have served for a minimum of 15 years. These nominees must have an approved exception from the Sergeant Major of Army Public Affairs.
5. Nominees must have distinguished themselves through significant and lasting contributions to the profession, history or traditions of the U.S. Army or the U.S. Army Public Affairs career field. Nominees.
6. To nominate an individual, send a completed Army Public Affairs Hall of Fame Nomination Form, available for download at <https://www.army.mil/publicaffairs/halloffame/>, to SGM Mary Ferguson at mary.e.ferguson40.mil@army.mil.

XII. MAJ. GEN. KEITH L. WARE BIOGRAPHY

Maj. Gen. Keith L. Ware was born in Denver on November 23, 1915. His military career began on July 9, 1941 when he undertook his basic training at Camp Roberts, California following his induction into the Army under the Selective Service Act. He attended Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning, Georgia and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant of Infantry on July 18, 1942.

Assigned to the 3rd Infantry Division, he sailed on October 22, 1942 from Hampton Roads, Virginia and was part of the North African invasion force. He participated in the Algeria-French Morocco and Tunisian Campaigns. The next major operations he participated in were the invasion of Sicily, the Naples-Foggia battles of Italy, the landings at Anzio and then on the San Tropez beaches of France in August of 1944.

On June 18, 1945, he was awarded the Medal of Honor. An excerpt from the citation states, "On December 26, 1944, while serving as battalion commander of 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry, near Sigolsheim, France, he went forward of the front line elements of his command and for two hours reconnoitered a strongly held enemy position. He then led a small patrol forward and destroyed or captured four machine-gun positions and killed numerous enemy riflemen. Half of the patrol including himself were wounded, but he refused medical attention until the position was captured by his men. As an interesting side note, Audie Murphy received his Medal of Honor for actions in January 1945 as a member of Lt. Col. Ware's battalion. Later, he served as one of Ware's company commanders.

After serving six months in the occupation forces of Germany, Ware returned to attend the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth and then was assigned to the Military District of Washington. This is where he met his future wife Joyce, and they were married five months later on May 3, 1947.

Ware was then assigned to West Point to teach Military Psychology and Leadership, then attended the Armed Forces Staff College and was assigned to serve in Korea from March 1955 until June of 1957. It was then off to the National War College, back to Washington D.C. to serve as a Congressional Liaison and then a tour in Europe. During his next assignment as Assistant Division Commander of the 2d Armored Division ("Hell on Wheels") at Fort Hood, Texas, he was promoted to brigadier general. His next tour of duty was as Deputy Chief and Chief of Information for the Department of the Army from Sept. 1964 through Nov. 1967. During that tour, he was promoted to Maj. Gen. on July 1, 1966.

Originally due for assignment to Germany, Ware appealed to the Secretary of the Army and was reassigned to Vietnam where he initially served in major command assignments until taking over as commander of the 1st Infantry Division ("Big Red One"). Six months after assuming command, while moving forward to get "first hand" observations of the offensive operation in progress, he was killed when his helicopter was shot down on September 13, 1968. His funeral was held and he was laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery. President Johnson, whom Ware had known from his legislative liaison days, attended.

His wife, who resides in Colorado, said that "he loved his country dearly and was a man of very high morals, very dedicated and a wonderful human being."

The Army continues to recognize Maj. Gen. Ware and his accomplishments to this day. The Army's annual Awards for Journalism are named after him as are the Parade Ground and an Elementary School at Fort Riley, Kansas (traditional home of the "Big Red One"); a range facility at Fort Benning, Georgia (home of the Infantry); a Simulation Center at Rock Island Arsenal, Illinois; and, of course, an etching on panel 44W of the Vietnam War Memorial. His Medal of Honor is currently on display at the National Infantry Museum at Fort Benning.

Appendix A, Federal Laws and DoD Policy

1. All products must comply with applicable laws and DoD policy, including copyright and intellectual property laws and regulations, and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Information regarding copyright and intellectual property laws may be found at www.copyright.gov. HIPPA information may be found at www.hhs.gov.
2. Productions containing commercial music must conform to U.S. copyright laws. This generally includes synchronization rights obtained via a music license agency. Otherwise, military units must obtain written approval from the artist, musicians' union and/or record company, to include synchronization rights. Rights obtained for commercial music used in productions submitted to the competition must include unlimited distribution. Individual or personally purchased licenses may not be used. Organizations may be asked to provide written confirmation that all music complies with copyright law and DoD standards.
3. All products must meet the requirements for public affairs release as stated in Change 1 of DoD Instruction 5230.29, "Security and Policy Review of Information for Public Release," dated April 14, 2017. Any questions regarding public release should be directed to the local public affairs office.
4. Stories must conform to Change 1 of DoD Instruction 5120.04, "DoD Newspapers, Magazines, Guides, and Installation Maps," dated November 20, 2017. Blog posts must be from an official military blog that has been registered as required in DoD Instruction 8170.01, "Online Information Management and Electronic Messaging," dated January 2, 2019.
5. Graphics, photos and video products must conform to Change 2 of DoD Instruction 5040.02, "Visual Information," dated April 23, 2018, and include metadata in accordance with the DoD Visual Information Style Guide dated July 16, 2018.

Appendix B, Unit Eligibility List

Below is a list of commands that are authorized to conduct command level competitions prior to forwarding products to the Department of the Army MG Keith L. Ware Communications Awards Competition. All other commands may submit three entries in each category. Each entry must be from a different competitor. (Reference AR 10-87 and appropriate Army General Orders (AGOs)).

ARMY COMMAND (ACOM)

- U.S. Army Recruiting Command (USAREC)
- U.S. Army Transformation and Training Command (T2COM)
- U.S. Army Materiel Command (AMC)

- U.S. Army Network Enterprise Technology Command
- U.S. Army Cyber Command
- U.S. Army Space and Missile Command

U.S. ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

- U.S. Army National Guard Bureau (NGB)

U.S. ARMY RESERVE COMPONENT

- U.S. Army Reserves Command (USARC)

DOD LEVEL MAJOR COMMANDS (MAJCOM)

- War Media Activity Headquarters (U.S. Army element)

ARMY SERVICE COMPONENT COMMANDS (ASCC)

- U.S. Army Southern European Task Force, Africa (SETAF-AF)
- U.S. Army Western Hemisphere Command (USAWHC)
- U.S. Army Central (USARCENT)/Third Army
- U.S. Army Europe and Africa (USAREUR-AF)/Seventh Army
- U.S. Army Pacific (USARPAC)
- U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC)
- U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command (INSCOM)
- U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command (USACIDC)
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- U.S. Army Military District of Washington (MDW)
- United States Military Academy (USMA)
- U.S. Army Space and Missile Command
- U.S. Army War College (USAWC)
- U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center (USAASC)
- U.S. Army Financial Management Command (USAFMCOM)
- U.S. Army Human Resources Command (HRC)
- U.S. Army Civilian Human Resources Agency (USACHRA)
- Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) and U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery (USSAHNC)

Appendix C, Product Definitions

All products will contain embedded captions and other required metadata, including a VIRIN, as required by the DoD Visual Information Style Guide. In addition, all products must support or contribute to organizational communication objectives and be authorized products approved for public release.

A. Graphic Design Products

Upload products to DVIDS using the graphics upload portal. Once uploaded, ensure the graphics are then published to DVIDS. This requires extra steps. See DVIDS website for instructions.

Animation. Product includes various media components that allow for animation, such as video production elements, digital displays, web animations or info graphics. Any animation style is allowed, such as 2-D, 2.5-D, 3-D, or stop motion. Standard lower thirds do not qualify as animation, even if motion is present. Must not use any copyrighted materials, such as movie clips and sound bites or music without broadcast rights. Product may not contain copyrighted rigs, props or characters. Upload to DVIDS as a high-resolution MP4 or SVG file.

Digital Art. Original work created by digital means. Examples include digital paintings, vector art, and 3-D renderings. A hand-drawn sketch, which is then digitized, may be used as the starting point, but these marks may not be visible in the final product. Does not include animation, cartoons, comic strips, and still photographs enhanced by digital means.

Identity Design. Original work that represents a logo or crest that was used in some kind of official military capacity. Examples include unit coin designs, team logos and unit crests. Unit crests must have been registered with the appropriate office of heraldry prior to entry. Entrant must be prepared to provide proof of registration.

Layout & Design. Single- or two-page layouts created using elements from various sources. Examples include info charts, info graphics, flyers, certificates, CD covers, cover art, and posters. All must be completed by the entrant, but elements can come from other sources. Entry is limited to two pages that may be extracted from a larger work published between Jan. 1, 2026, and Dec. 31, 2026. Layouts from interactive publications or interactive PDF documents are not allowed.

Photo Illustration. Single image or graphic created using a single or multiple images. Images used may be sourced from other means (i.e. not the nominee), but 100% of graphic production must be from the nominee. Must be properly identified as a photo illustration in the caption.

B. Photo Products

Feature Photo. Storytelling picture not news related, usually a situation that has strong human interest or a fresh view of a commonplace occurrence featuring a military organization, military equipment, employees or family members.

News Photo. Scheduled or unscheduled news event featuring a military organization, employees, equipment or family members. Ensure product contains the required metadata, including a VIRIN and a caption prior to uploading to DVIDS.

Picture Story. See photo series.

Photo Series. A series of at least 7, but no more than 12 photos that depict a military or military-related storyline or theme, including a military operation or contingency, or participation in a military exercise or other training event. Coverage of the event must be preplanned and deliberate. Photos of a cancer victim receiving treatment over the course of the contest year are acceptable. Photos depicting one particular aspect of a military operation or exercise, or the entire event are also acceptable. Key is that the coverage was planned with a specific communication objective. A picture story is considered a photo series.

Portrait. A picture of a person that identifies and captures the essence of that person's character and depicts his or her personality. Subject must have a connection to the military. Only one person may be portrayed prominently (as the main subject) in the photo. Official photos are not allowed.

Sports Photo. A picture depicting some form of physical activity or sport (football, martial arts, swimming, etc.). Subjects must have a connection to the military.

C. Video Products

B-roll. Product must be of the same military or military-related theme and must be filmed by one individual in its entirety. Do not include reporter standups, narration or music bed. Natural sound is allowed and encouraged. An interview with a subject matter expert may be included; however, the interview may not be used in the sound bed throughout. Some of the b-roll footage may also be used in a multimedia product, video story or video series produced by the same individual. Upload to DVIDS as one file.

Multimedia Product. Illustrates the use of visual storytelling techniques across multiple digital mediums while telling a story. Must have a military tie. All forms of media are allowed: audio, video, photography, graphics, animation, or any other visual tool. Product must use a minimum of four elements. May be a feature, personality or news journalism piece. Product must be a single story produced and edited by one individual with at least 51 percent of the story's content created by that individual. Product may include dramatization if the enhancement does not misrepresent the subject of the original, (2) it is clearly and readily apparent from the content that it is not intended to be an accurate representation of the actual

event, and (3) the caption indicates the product contains dramatization. See Enclosure 10 of DoD Instruction 5040.02 for specific requirements. Entry will be judged by the quality of storytelling and creative use of combined mediums.

Video Series. A sequence of videos on a common military-related theme. Must be planned in advance with each video clearly identified as part of a series with either an anchor lead, or a consistent opening and closing. For example, this video is the first (second, third, or fourth) in a series of four videos about <topic>. Entrant must have contributed at least 51 percent of the footage with the remainder coming from any other non-copyrighted source. Entrant must have performed all the editing. Appropriate effects, fades or wipes are allowed. Natural sound, music and voice-over narration may be used.

Video Story. May be a feature, personality or news journalism piece. Lower-thirds and an opening title are acceptable. The product must have military relevance. Entrant must have filmed at least 51 percent of the footage with the remainder coming from any other non-copyrighted source. Entrant must have performed all the editing. Appropriate effects, fades or wipes are allowed. Natural sound, music and voice-over narration may be used. Reporter stand-ups are allowed but not required.

Video Spot. Must be 60 seconds or less in duration. Must be the work of one individual in its entirety (planned, filmed and edited). Identify the target audience in the caption.

D. Written Products

Upload blog posts and stories to DVIDS as a news story with or without photos.

Blog Post. An article written using an informational or conversational style that conveys the writer's opinion. Ghost-written blogs are ineligible. Blog posts must be from an official military blog that has been registered as such as required in DoD Instruction 8170.01, "Online Information Management and Electronic Messaging," dated January 2, 2019.

Commentary. A commentary is an article that conveys the writer's opinion on a topic as specified in DoDI 5120.04. Ghost-written commentaries are ineligible. Commentaries posted to an official military website are allowed as are commentaries published in a command newspaper, magazine or newsletter.

Feature Story. Feature story must have a focus that is maintained and supported throughout. Product may be a sports, human interest, personality or news feature.

Information Story. A story that conveys information while answering the five W's (who, what, where, when, why) and H (how). It can be written in different shapes and forms, including the Inverted Pyramid, Kabob/Wall Street Journal Style, Hour/Martini Glass, and Question and Answer. News and sports stories are allowed.

Photojournalism. Product includes a story and at least three, but no more than five photographs with embedded captions. Photos and story must be on the same topic and must be the work of one individual.

E. Other Terms

Caption. Used to identify the people or unit profiled in the product, and to describe what happened, and where and when it happened. The caption also explains why the event took place: the purpose of the event. It is added to the product's metadata prior to upload to DVIDS. Refer to the DoD Visual Information Style Guide for specific information and Appendix D for examples.

Closed caption (closed captioning). Used to display the audio portion of a television program or video product as text on the screen for individuals who are deaf or partially deaf.

Collection. A series of photos or a group of products organized for entry in specific categories.

Appendix D, Document Templates

This section contains templates to aid with the format of those documents.

A. Nomination Letter (Category M)

MEMORANDUM FOR Director, Army Global Communications Office, 1500 Army Pentagon,
Washington, D.C. 20310-1500

SUBJECT: Nomination of CPT Smith for Public Affairs Officer “Rising Star” Award

1. It is with great enthusiasm that I nominate CPT John Smith for the U.S. Army Public Affairs Officer “Rising Star” Award. CPT Smith embodies the traits of an outstanding public affairs officer, demonstrating exceptional leadership, professionalism and career skills that exceed his short time in FA46.
2. CPT Smith’s judgment is sound, as exemplified by the multiple times he has been counted on to respond to media requests for information.
3. CPT Smith acted as the Division Deputy Public Affairs Officer during a time of intense media scrutiny due to high operational tempo and high visibility events.
4. CPT Smith demonstrated his limitless potential by mentoring Public Affairs Soldiers and advising them on how to produce media products that will meet the goals of the Army Communication Plan.
5. I confirm that CPT Smith is eligible for this award, having only served in FA46 for 14 months, and all work submitted is his. CPT Smith reflects the Army values.
6. Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions. I can be reached at 555-228-4920 or Michael.a.jones.mil@army.mil

MICHAEL A. JONES
LTC, MI
Public Affairs Officer

B. List of Media Products (Category O)

Public Affairs Organization of the Year (Command Information) – Medium Division

Media Products

1. “Readiness driven by preventive maintenance” – June 2, 2025. Produced by Sgt. Langdon Alger
 - a. <https://www.dvidshub.net/video/971196/royal-international-air-tattoo-riat-2025-b-roll>
2. “Keeping the skies secure” – May 4, 2025. Produced by Mr. Steve Judd
 - a. <https://www.dvidshub.net/video/970719/flamg-crewman-arrive-fort-irwin>
3. “Hurricane Ned response draws praise” – April 2, 2025. Produced by Spc. Ben Brigade.
 - a. <https://www.dvidshub.net/video/940411/hurricane-milton-response-national-guard-bureau-chief-gen-steven-s-nordhaus>
4. “UH-47s arrive for NTC” – July 17, 2025. Produced by Pfc. Eli Johnson.
 - a. <https://www.dvidshub.net/video/940411/hurricane-milton-response-national-guard-bureau-chief-gen-steven-s-nordhaus>
5. “Three generations of service in 110th Artillery” – Feb. 2, 2025. Produced by Sgt. 1st Class John Matrix.
 - a. <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/478078/three-generations-service-florida-army-national-guard>

Appendix E, SGM Dawn Kilpatrick Memorial Scholarship Essay Rubric

Military Record (Not to Exceed 5 points)	Essay (up to 5 points per category; 15 points total)			Letters of Recommendation (Not to Exceed 5 points)
Military Record	Technical	Creativity	Feasibility	Letters of Recommendation
0-2 - SM has history of values violations, needs improvement, ACFT/APFT/Body Composition	0-2 - Essay demonstrates lack of technical proficiency - more than three grammatical errors, poor transitions, unclear thoughts, typographical errors; essay fails to clearly identify a or what problem it is addressing	0-2 - Recommendation demonstrates only a surface-level depth of thought or reflects a proposal that has already been executed; identifies a problem that is not representative of the vast majority of Army Public Affairs	0-2 - Recommendation is not feasible due to legal or resourcing constraints; recommendation does not address the problem statement identified	0-2 - Missing letters of Recommendation; letters of recommendation do not offer strong support
3-4 - SM has no negative notes in their background; evals reflect favorable performance, but not necessarily all exceeded standards	3-4 - Essay has some grammatical errors, transition gaps, clarity, but is generally solid	3-4 - Recommendation demonstrates an outside-the-box approach to solving a problem that has a far-reaching impact on Army	3-4 - Recommendation is legally feasible, but may require additional resources	3-4 - Letters of Recommendation offer strong support
5 - SM has substantiated history of performance that reflects far exceeded standards	5 - Essay is clearly written, well-articulated, free of grammatical errors and typos	5 - Essay reflects a wildly innovative approach to an Army-wide problem	5 - Recommendation can/should be implemented immediately	5 - Letters of Recommendation clearly articulate why this candidate is the best choice

Appendix F, KLW Entry Forms

Entry forms can be found via the link below:

https://www.army.mil/e2/downloads/rv7/klw/admin/klw_entry_form.pdf

The below checklist was created by Defense Media Activity to set a standard for DVIDS products and competition entries at the DoD Media Awards level that will face disqualification or score demerits. This checklist will also be used by DA-level judges when evaluating submissions. For more information on music licenses see Appendix F, Section A.

DoD VI Policy Compliance Checklist			
Use this checklist to verify a visual information (VI) product complies with DoD VI policy prior to upload to the Defense Visual Information Distribution System (DVIDS) and entry to the DoD Media Awards competition. Go to the reference listed for an explanation of each policy requirement. Legend: Pass: Complies with DoD VI policy. A-DQ: Automatic Disqualification (A-DQ) C-A: DoD will allow corrections. If none are made, points will be deducted. C-D: DoD will allow corrections. If none are made, entry will be automatically disqualified. VIRIN: Visual Information Record Identification Number			
Entry Requirements	Yes	No	Notes
1. Was the VI product produced and published to DVIDS in 2024? (DoD Media Awards Nomination Guidance)	Pass	A-DQ	Corrections not allowed.
2. Does the VI product have military or DoD relevance? (DoD Media Awards Nomination Guidance)	Pass	A-DQ	Corrections not allowed.
VIRIN Requirements	Yes	No	Notes
3. Does the Vision ID listed in the product's VIRIN match the individual listed in the credit line? (Page 23, DoDI 5040.02.)	Pass	Points deducted	C-A
4. Does the VIRIN contain the correct sequence number? (Page 24, DoDI 5040.02.)	Pass	Points deducted	C-A

5. Does the date in the VIRIN match the date in the caption? (Page 23, DoDI 5040.02 ; page 27, DoD Visual Information Style Guide)	Pass	Points deducted	C-A
6. Does the DVIDS “Date Taken” field match the date in the VIRIN and the date listed in the caption? (“Date Shot” entry, Page 36, DoD Visual Information Style Guide)	Pass	Points deducted	C-A
Caption Requirements	Yes	No	Notes
7. Does the caption answer the 5 W’s (who, what, when, where, and why)? (Pages 26-30, DoD Visual Information Style Guide)	Pass	Points deducted	C-A
8. Is only one person listed in the caption's credit line? For the DoD Media Contest, only one person may be listed in the caption’s credit line. (DoD Media Awards Nomination Guidance)	Pass	Points deducted	C-A
9. Does the caption list the hometown and state of any person or persons identified in the VI product? (“Hometown” entry, page 7, DoD Visual Information Style Guide , and paragraph C4.2.2.5.2.1.14, pages 39-40, DoD 5400.11-R , “Department of Defense Privacy Program.”)	Go to question 9.a	Pass	
9.a. Does the unit have <u>written</u> permission from the individual to publish their hometown and state? An individual’s hometown and state may not be released to the public without their written consent. State alone, however, may be disclosed per DoD 5400.11-R .	Go to question 9.b	A-D	Corrections not allowed.
9.b. Was written permission obtained <u>before</u> the VI product was published to DVIDS? Disclosing an individual’s hometown and state without their permission is a violation of the Privacy Act of 1974. Therefore, obtain written permission from the individual before uploading the VI product to DVIDS. Disclosing the state alone is authorized. Entrants must be prepared to provide written documentation when queried.	Pass ¹	A-D	Corrections not allowed.
Metadata Requirements	Yes	No	Notes

10. Is the correct location where the image was taken listed in the metadata? (City/Base/Location/Ship; State or Province; Country or Area) (Page 37, DoD Visual Information Style Guide)	Pass	Points deducted	C-A
11. Do the release instructions include a release status? (Page 37, DoD Visual Information Style Guide)	Pass	See notes.	C-D
12. Do the release instructions include the release authority's name, duty position, phone number and/or email address? (Page 37, DoD Visual Information Style Guide)	Pass	See notes.	C-D
13. Does the VI product contain copyrighted material, including music and other proprietary information? (Page 16, DoDI 5040.07)	Go to question 14.	Pass	
14. Does the unit have <u>written</u> permission stating the organization and the DoD have permission to use the copyrighted material into perpetuity? A screenshot from the company's website is not adequate permission and will not be accepted. Note that a legal review by the entrant's legal office is also required per DoDI 5040.07 . Entrants must be prepared to provide this documentation when queried.	Pass ¹	A-DQ	DoD will not allow corrections.

¹ Entrants must provide documentation when queried. Entrants who fail to do so will have their entries disqualified.