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Arts and Media



The Associated Church Press and the Religion Communicators Council met April 19-21 in a joint convention at Fourth Presbyterian Church in Chicago. (GSR photo/Chris Herlinger)

by GSR Staff

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Global Sisters Report and National Catholic Reporter staff members have won seven awards from the Associated Church Press for work that appeared in GSR in 2022.

The awards were announced April 20 in Chicago at an annual convention held in conjunction with the Religion Communicators Council.

Two of the awards were for GSR's website: an award of merit in the category of "Best Independent Website" for GSR staff and contributors and honorable mention for website redesign for NCR managing editor Stephanie Yeagle and GSR managing editor Pam Hackenmiller.

In their comments, the judges called GSR's website "uplifting and informative, thoughtful and challenging, with writers from all over the world. Both newsworthy and personal, spiritual articles make for a whole-person, whole-mind, whole-spirit reading experience."

In writing awards, Doreen Ajiambo, GSR's Africa correspondent, won an award of excellence for coverage of a convention or meeting for her reporting for GSR and EarthBeat on the United Nations' November 2022 COP27 meetings in Egypt.

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"The stories were not just reports but rather well-reported and -told stories of the Catholic perspective that focused on the folks most affected by climate change," the judges noted. "A great example of meeting coverage that's not just about the meeting and is of interest to readers who may have nothing to do with the meeting itself."

Chris Herlinger, GSR international correspondent; Gail DeGeorge, GSR editor; Presentation Sr. Joyce Meyer, international sister liaison; and Christopher White, NCR Vatican correspondent, won an award of merit for meeting or convention coverage for their stories from the 2022 plenary of the International Union of Superiors General in Rome.

"This coverage shines a light on an important but sometimes overlooked part of the Catholic church: the women," the judges wrote. "Reading these stories, you get the full view of the breadth and depth of the work of the sisters of the Catholic church.

This was a deep and meaningful gathering, and the stories show that."

Herlinger; Rhina Guidos, now Latin America correspondent; and Indian freelance writer Thomas Scaria won an award of merit for a series on the war in Ukraine. Herlinger also won a DeRose-Hinkhouse Memorial Award from the Religion Communicators Council, announced April 19, for his coverage of the war.



Chris Herlinger, right, GSR's international correspondent, with Brian Fesler, president of the Religion Communicators Council, after an April 19 award ceremony at Fourth Presbyterian Church in Chicago. Herlinger won one of the council's DeRose-Hinkhouse Memorial Awards for his coverage of the war in Ukraine. (Courtesy of Chris Herlinger)

"What we read in the series is a perfect blend of the personal and the larger scope," the Religions Communicators Council judges wrote of Herlinger's work. "We feel the fear, frustration, and anger but also the faith, hope and charity. ... This type of writing should be the standard we all aim for in our reporting."

GSR national correspondent Dan Stockman won an honorable mention for a photo essay for coverage of sisters and volunteers helping survivors rebuild in tornado-affected Kentucky. Freelancer Lisa Elmaleh won an award of merit for a photo essay called "Frontera," which focused on the work of sisters at the U.S.-Mexico border.

In addition to the awards for Global Sisters Report, Herlinger won honorable mention for poetry that appeared in Collegeville (Minnesota) Institute's online journal, Bearings Online, while NCR news editor Joshua J. McElwee won honorable mention for a piece on the synodal agenda that appeared in Commonweal.

The Associated Church Press also named Aleja Hertzler-McCain, NCR's Bertelsen Editorial Fellow, a best emerging journalist and gave her an award of merit in in-depth coverage for her reporting for Sojourners magazine on disability rights.

The Associated Church Press, founded in 1916, is the oldest interdenominational religious press association in North America. An award of excellence is the association's highest honor, followed by an award of merit and then honorable mention.

The DeRose-Hinkhouse Memorial Awards are named to honor the late Victor DeRose and the late Paul M. Hinkhouse, leading lithographers in New York City and longtime friends of the Religion Communicators Council. The council is an association of faith-based journalists and communications professionals.