

# Defense Media Merit Awards

Nomination Guide for Calendar Year 2021

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Program administered by:

**Defense Media Activity**

6700 Taylor Ave

Fort George G. Meade, MD 20755

[DefenseMediaAwards@mail.mil](mailto:DefenseMediaAwards@mail.mil)



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
DEFENSE MEDIA ACTIVITY  
6700 TAYLOR AVENUE  
FORT MEADE, MD 20755-7061

October 18, 2021

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

MEMORANDUM FOR COMMUNICATION DIRECTORS, DEFENSE AGENCIES  
COMMUNICATION DIRECTORS, DOD FIELD ACTIVITIES  
COMMUNICATION DIRECTORS, COMBATANT COMMANDS  
DIRECTOR, NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
PRINCIPAL LINE OF BUSINESS AND STAFF DIRECTORS,  
DEFENSE MEDIA ACTIVITY

SUBJECT: Request for Nominations to the 2021 Defense Media Merit Awards

This memorandum is the call for nominations to the 2021 Defense Media Merit Awards competition. Winners in the of-the-year categories will compete in the Defense Media Awards competition.

Federal civilian employees assigned to Defense Agencies, DoD Field Activities, Combatant Commands, and Joint Task Forces are invited to submit their work. Specific guidance for military members assigned to DMA is published and distributed separately.

If you have any questions, please contact Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Sean Hurt at [DefenseMediaAwards@mail.mil](mailto:DefenseMediaAwards@mail.mil) or call (301) 222-6757. Thank you for your support.

SANDERS.JOSE  
PH.A.1082464871

Digitally signed by  
SANDERS.JOSEPH.A.10824648  
Date: 2021.10.18 10:55:44 -0400

For H.E. Pittman  
Director

# Defense Media Merit Awards

## Nomination Guidance for Calendar Year 2021

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## I. ABOUT THE AWARDS PROGRAM

- A. The Defense Media Merit Awards (DMMA) program recognizes excellence among *U.S. government civilian* broadcast journalists, graphic artists, journalists, photographers, public affairs practitioners, mass communication specialists and videographers assigned to combatant commands, joint task forces, defense agencies and DoD field activities, including the Defense Media Activity. It also fosters an environment of innovation and growth, leading to more effective communication programs. The competition is administered by the Defense Media Activity under the authority of Department of Defense Directive 5105.74, “Defense Media Activity (DMA),” paragraph E3.1.22.
- B. The DMMA competition and the guidance contained in this document also provides a competitive pathway for U.S. government civilian employees assigned to combatant commands, joint task forces, defense agencies and DoD field activities, including the Defense Media Activity, to submit their work for judging as potential entries into the DoD Media Awards competition.
- C. Military members assigned to the combatant commands, joint task forces, defense agencies and DoD field activities, including the Defense Media Activity, submit their work to their respective Service competition. However, *team products created by Defense Media Activity personnel, regardless of the team members’ branch of service, must all compete in the DMMA competition.*

## II. POINT OF CONTACT

For information regarding entry requirements, email the DMMA contest coordinator, Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Sean Hurt, at DefenseMediaAwards@mail.mil or call (301) 222-6167 or (301) 222-6757.

### III. MILESTONES

#### 2021

Jan. 1            Program year began  
Dec. 31         Program year ends

#### 2022

Jan. 7           Judges selected

March 4         Deadline for the following products to enter the DMMA competition:

- Individual work of U.S. government civilian employees assigned to combatant commands, joint task forces, defense agencies, and DoD field activities, including the Defense Media Activity.
- Unit products created by teams assigned to combatant commands, joint task forces, defense agencies, and DoD field activities, including the Defense Media Activity and its' components
- State-level unit products created by National Guard Joint Force Headquarters staff members.

March 14-17    DMMA entries judged

March 30        DMMA winners announced.  
Winning entries submitted to the DoD Media Awards competition.

## IV. ELIGIBILITY

- A. U.S. government civilian employees assigned to combatant commands, joint task forces, defense agencies and DoD field activities, including the Defense Media Activity, with the photographer, journalist, photojournalist, videographer, broadcast journalist, graphic designer, communication, public affairs or equivalent occupation series are eligible to enter the competition.
- B. Teams composed of military members, U.S. government employees, or any combination thereof with the photographer, journalist, photojournalist, videographer, broadcast journalist, graphic designer, communication, public affairs or equivalent occupation series assigned to combatant commands, joint task forces, defense agencies, and DoD field activities, including the Defense Media Activity, are eligible to enter their team products to the competition. ***All team products, regardless of the team's composition – all military, some military and some U.S. government civilians, or all U.S. government civilians – compete in the DMMA competition as unit entries.*** Products created with contributions from contractor employees are allowed, but they must not have been created as part of a contract or by a team comprised exclusively of contract employees. Contractors' contribution to a team product must be less than 50 percent of the total submission.
- C. **National Guard Joint Force Headquarters staff members** with the photographer, journalist, photojournalist, videographer, broadcast journalist, graphic artist, communication, public affairs or equivalent occupation series are eligible enter their state-level unit products to the competition. Products are the work of teams comprised of civilian employees and military members with contributions by contract employees. However, products must not have been created as part of a contract or by a team comprised exclusively of contract employees. Contractors' contribution to a team product must be less than 50 percent of the total submission.
- D. Military members assigned to the combatant commands, joint task forces, defense agencies and DoD field activities, including the Defense Media Activity, are ineligible to enter their individual work products to the DMMA competition. They must submit their individual work to their respective Service competition. However, ***team products created by Defense Media Activity personnel, regardless of the team members' branch of service, must all compete in the DMMA competition.*** Military members assigned to the Defense Media Activity should refer to command guidance.
- E. Active-duty and Reserve military members assigned to combatant commands, joint task forces, defense agencies and DoD field activities enter their individual work products to their respective Service competition. Military members assigned to the Defense Media Activity should refer to the DMA media contest guidance published under separate cover.
- F. Army and Air National Guard members assigned to combatant commands, joint task forces, defense agencies and DoD field activities enter their individual work products through the National Guard Bureau.

- G. Employees who leave U.S. government service during the year may compete as long as the material submitted was completed in its entirety while during DoD civilian employment.
- H. Personnel assigned to the Coast Guard Auxiliary and the Civil Air Patrol are prohibited from competing unless they meet the eligibility criteria stated above.
- I. Military, civilian and contract personnel assigned to “Stars and Stripes” newspapers are not eligible to participate. All non-appropriated fund productions and personnel are also ineligible.
- J. Employees of another nation, commonly referred to as local national employees, are not eligible to complete. Products produced with their assistance are eligible for unit categories. However, they will not be recognized individually and must contribute less than 50 percent of the total submission.
- K. Government contractor employees are not authorized to compete in any individual category. Products produced with the assistance of government contractor employees are eligible for unit categories. However, contractor employees will not be recognized individually and must contribute less than 50 percent of the total submission.

## V. ENTRY CRITERIA

- A. All products entering the competition must have been created to support or contribute to organizational communication objectives and must meet the highest standards of production, execution and professional excellence. Products must convey, by content and delivery, relevant information that supports that command's information and/or mission needs and, therefore, must be authorized products approved for public release.
- B. Entries also must have been created, approved for public release, and published between Jan. 1, 2021 and Dec. 31, 2021. In addition, products for all entries, except for the Online Publication category, must have been uploaded and published to the Defense Visual Information Distribution System (DVIDS) between Jan. 1, 2021 and 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time Dec. 31, 2021. Do not upload Online Publication entries to DVIDS; submit them directly to the DMMA contest coordinator.
- C. Civilian enterprise guides and directories, yearbooks, cruise books, and products produced using non-appropriated funds are not eligible to compete.
- D. All still and motion imagery (photos and videos), and graphic products will contain embedded captions and other required metadata, and will be assigned a Visual Information Record Identification Number (VIRIN) as instructed in the DoD Visual Information Style Guide dated July 16, 2019 and Change 2 to DoDI 5040.02, “Visual Information,” dated April 23, 2019.



- E. All entries must comply with federal law and DoD policy. For a complete list, see Appendix A.
- F. Each combatant command, joint task force, defense agency, and DoD field activity (except for the Defense Media Activity, see paragraphs G, and I in this section), may enter no more than three entries per category listed in Section XIII. ***Each entry must be from a different competitor.*** The of-the-year categories, however, are limited to one nomination.
- G. Each U.S. government civilian employee assigned to the Defense Media Activity may submit one entry per individual category listed in Section XIII.
- H. The Defense Information School, each division of the CONUS Production Directorate, each American Forces Network station, each Media Center and each Media Bureau assigned to the Defense Media Activity may submit one entry into the each of the following three categories: short- and long-form production video and publication. . Flagship publications, such as “Airman” and “All Hands” magazine are ineligible to compete in the Online Publication category. ***Leaders from each division, AFN station, media center, and media bureau will submit a list of their nominees,*** as stated in Section VII, by the deadline listed in Section III.
- I. The DMMA competition is one of six competitions eligible to submit entries to the DoD-level DoD Media Awards. The DMMA competition may submit only one entry to each of-the-year category.
- J. No single product may be entered in more than one category except when entered as part of an of-the-year entry. In addition, individual components (graphics, photos, video, etc.) of a multimedia product, picture story, or photojournalism entry may not be entered into other categories as these items were created for the overall product, not for individual use.
- K. The Communicator of the Year category is open to U.S. government civilian personnel assigned to combatant commands, joint task forces, defense agencies, and DoD field activating, including the Defense Media Activity, as long as they meet eligibility criteria listed in Section IV, paragraph A. Those who elect to compete in the Communicator of the Year category may also enter one other of-the-year category (either the graphic designer, photographer, videographer or writer of the year category) during the same competition year. Those who elect ***not*** to compete in the Communicator of the Year category may enter more than one of the following categories: graphic designer, photographer, videographer or writer of the year. Since military members assigned to combatant commands, joint task forces, defense agencies, and DoD field activities must compete in their Service competition, entries received from military members for this category in the DMMA competition will be rejected.
- L. Entries must reach the contest coordinator by the deadlines established in Section III.

## VI. ENTRY DISQUALIFICATION AND REJECTION

- A. Products entered by personnel who do not meet eligibility requirements listed in Section IV will be disqualified.
- B. Products that do not meet the specific category requirements listed in Section XIII or that fail to follow federal law or established DoD policy will be disqualified.
- C. Products that do not reach the contest coordinator by the deadlines listed in Section III will be disqualified.
- D. Challenges in judging will be decided by the Defense Media Activity director or the director's designee.
- E. DVIDS media competition submission requirements enforce as much objective criteria as possible and will prohibit the submitter from a successful submission if errors are found using automation checks. Therefore, it is the entrant's responsibility to ensure the product is uploaded and published to DVIDS correctly. ***Entries not uploaded or published to DVIDS as required in the category descriptions will be disqualified.***

## VII. HOW TO SUBMIT ENTRIES

- A. Entry to the DMMA competition, except for the Online Publication category, will be accomplished through DVIDS. Go to <https://www.dividshub.net/> for instructions on how to upload and publish products to DVIDS and how to submit entries using the Awards interface module within DVIDS. ***Entries not uploaded and published to DVIDS as required in the category descriptions will be disqualified.*** Send links to the Online Publication entries to the contest coordinator.
- B. Combatant commands, joint task forces, defense agencies, and DoD field activities will ensure submissions meet quality standards prior to entry. A letter listing individual and unit submissions will be sent to the DMMA contest coordinator by the deadline listed in Section III. This letter will contain the following information:
  - 1. **Individual Awards:** For each category, provide the first name, middle initial, last name, product title, and the DVIDS product ID number (e.g., Audio ID 12345) for each entrant. For of-the-year submissions, list product titles and DVIDS product ID numbers for all products in the portfolio. Include the URL for the blog post entry in addition to the DVIDS URL.
  - 2. **Unit Awards:** For each category, provide the unit or organization name, mailing address, product title, and the first name, middle initial, last names and ranks of all contributors. Also list the product title and DVIDS video ID number for the short-form and long-form products, and the DVIDS publication ID number for each entry to the publication category. For Online Publication entries, provide the complete URL.

3. Should a name on the submission list be different from the name associated with the product in DVIDS, the name associated with the individual's DVIDS profile will take precedence.
- C. National Guard Joint Force Headquarters staffs submitting state-level unit productions will ensure submissions meet quality standards prior to entry. A letter listing unit submissions will be sent to DMMA contest coordinator by the deadline listed in Section III. This letter will contain the information listed in Section VII, paragraph B.2.

## **VIII. DESCRIPTION OF AWARD CATEGORY TYPES**

Each award category is marked as either an individual or as a unit entry.

- A. Individual awards are for products created by a single person who performed a majority of the work. Photos or graphics must not contain signatures, logos or markings of any kind on the image.
- B. Unit awards are for products created as a result of a team effort. Products created with contributions from contractor employees are allowed, but they must not have been created as part of a contract or by a team comprised exclusively of contract employees. Contractors' contribution to a team product must be less than 50 percent of the total submission.

## IX. AWARDS

- A. **Individual Awards.** DMMA awards will be given to U.S. government civilians competing in 24 individual award categories: Communicator of the Year, five graphic design, six photo, six print, six video. First-, second- and third-place awards will be given in all individual categories except for the of-the-year categories. Only one person will receive an award in each of-the-year category.
- a. First-place individual award winners will receive plaques and certificates.
  - b. Second- and third-place individual award winners will receive certificates.
  - c. No award will be made if the judges deem that no one entry meets program standards. No honorable mentions will be awarded.
- B. **Unit Awards.** Awards will be given to combatant commands, joint task forces, National Guard Joint Force Headquarters staffs, defense agencies, and DoD field activities, including the Defense Media Activity, competing in four unit award categories: two print and two video. First-, second- and third-place awards will be given in all categories.
1. First-place unit award winners will receive a plaque for the office of primary responsibility. Contributors will each receive certificates.
  2. Second- and third-place unit award winners will receive certificates: one to the unit and one to each contributor.
  3. No award will be made if the judges deem that no one entry meets program standards. No honorable mentions will be awarded.
- C. Plaques and certificates will be conveyed to the combatant commands, joint task forces, defense agencies, DoD field activities, and National Guard Bureau for presentation to the winners.

## X. NOTIFICATION OF WINNERS

- A. The combatant commands, joint task forces, defense agencies, and DoD field activities who submitted entries to the DMMA competition will be notified of the winners and will be responsible for notifying the winners. The National Guard Bureau will also be notified so they may notify the winners.
- B. Winning entries will be announced via the Defense Media Activity website at [www.dma.mil](http://www.dma.mil) after entries have been submitted to the DoD Media Awards program.

## XI. AFTER-ACTION REVIEW / MEDIA AWARDS GOVERNANCE

The Defense Media Activity will host a DoD Media Awards Governance Committee meeting May 11-12, 2022, with the Services' appointed voting members and National Guard Bureau advisers to review and update competition guidance for the 2021 award cycle. The DMMA unit contest coordinator will attend to provide feedback in a non-voting capacity.

## XII. JUDGING GUIDANCE

- A. Judging will occur March 14-17, 2022.
- B. Judges will be assigned and coordinated by DMMA contest coordinator. The coordinator will ensure judges provide feedback for each entry and will share this feedback with entrants.
- C. The combatant command, joint task forces, defense agencies, and DoD field activities who submitted entries will be notified of the winners and will be responsible for notifying the winners. The National Guard Bureau will also be informed so it may, in turn, notify its organizations who entered the contest.
- D. A panel of three judges will be selected for each medium (graphic design, photography, print and video). Selection criteria for judges will be based on their professional experience in the communication and visual information fields. The lead judge for each panel will not be a Defense Media Activity staff member.
- E. All entries will be judged on professional excellence, originality, storytelling ability and creativity. The judges' discretionary comments and feedback will be provided to the DMMA contest coordinator board after the competition, who will forward them to the entrant's command.

## XIII. CATEGORIES

### A. General Information.

1. The 28 (24 individual and four unit) categories listed include five categories eligible to enter the DoD Media Awards competition: Communicator of the Year, Civilian Graphic Designer of the Year, Civilian Photographer of the Year, Thomas Jefferson Civilian Writer of the Year and Civilian Videographer of the Year.
2. U.S. government civilian employees assigned to combatant commands, joint task forces, defense agencies and DoD field activities, including Defense Media Activity U.S. government civilians assigned to the Air Force, Army, Navy and Marine Corps production divisions, enter their individual work to the *individual* categories.
3. Combatant commands, joint task forces, defense agencies, and DoD field activities, including the Defense Media Activity, will enter team products to the *unit* award categories. Team products created by National Guard Joint Headquarters Staff members also enter the unit award categories.
4. Refer to Section IV of these instructions for eligibility information and Section V for entry criteria.

- B. **Communicator of the Year.** Candidates must submit a **portfolio** consisting of *five* examples of their work. Entry must be a portfolio profiling the work credited to one individual.

Portfolio must contain the following:

- One print story (Must be either a commentary, feature story, information story or one stories of a series)
- One video story
- One photo (Must be either a news photo, feature photo, portrait or one photo from a photo series.)
- Two products of the candidate's choice from any of the *individual* award categories (Must not be a photo series.)

Follow entry criteria listed in Section V. Each product must follow the rules listed in the category descriptions.

Entrants may enter one photo from either the Photo Series or the Picture Story category, or one of the videos from a Video Series category as their candidate's choice.

If electing to enter a photojournalism entry as a candidate's choice, it must be the entire package (story and 3-5 photos) and it must be on a topic different from other products in the portfolio. Only one photojournalism product may be entered as part of the portfolio.

Upload each element of the portfolio as a separate product in DVIDS, and then follow the submission instructions to complete the portfolio.

Candidates are allowed to enter the Communicator of the Year and one other of-the-year category: graphic designer, photographer, videographer and writer of the year. Each portfolio, however, may not contain the same products. Candidates who enter duplicate products in each portfolio will be disqualified from the Communicator of the Year **and** the other of-the-year category.

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. For example, do not extract and submit a logo or other graphic from a multimedia product if the entire multimedia product is being submitted as a candidate's choice to this or another category.

Submit entry as a **portfolio** with the DVIDS Awards interface module.

Award Type: Individual.

- C. **Graphic Design.** Products must contain embedded captions and other required metadata, including a VIRIN. In addition, products must support or contribute to organizational communication objectives and be authorized products approved for public release. Products that do not follow these requirements will be disqualified. *Ineligible:* two-dimensional work created by free-hand methods using dry- or wet-based methods, such as line art, sketches, water colors and oil paintings, and work created using pencil, chalk and charcoal; pictures of displays; photo illustrations, and fine art pieces.

1. Digital Art. This category is for original work created by digital means. Examples of work accepted in this category are 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. **Ineligible:** animation, cartoons, comic strips, and still photographs enhanced by digital means. Within the caption, explain why the product was created, how it was used and the meaning/purpose of each composite element within the design. Product may be submitted as part of a graphic designer's portfolio or the Communicator of the Year category, but no other categories. Upload entry in DVIDS as a high-resolution file.  
Award type: Individual.
2. Identity Design. This category includes 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. **An entry entered in the Digital Art category cannot be entered in this category.** Unit crests must have been registered with the appropriate office of heraldry prior to entry. Entrant must be prepared to provide proof of registration. Within the caption, explain why the product was created, how it was used and the meaning/purpose of each composite element within the design. Product may be submitted as part of a graphic designer's portfolio or the Communicator of the Year category, but no other categories. Upload entry in DVIDS as a high-resolution file.  
Award Type: Individual.
3. Layout and Design. This category is for single-page or double-truck layouts created using elements from various sources. Examples include info charts, info graphics, flyers, certificates, CD covers, cover art, and posters. All layout and design work 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, 2021 and Dec. 31, 2021. Layouts from interactive publications or interactive PDF documents are **not** allowed. **An entry created and entered in the Digital Art category cannot enter this category.** For example, adding elements to a Digital Art entry and submitting it as a Layout and Design entry. **Using a Digital Art entry as part of the layout is also not permitted.** Product may be submitted as part of a graphic designer's portfolio or the Communicator of the Year category, but no other categories. Upload entry to DVIDS as a high-resolution file.  
Award Type: Individual.
4. Animation. Products include various media components that allow for animation, such as video production elements, digital displays, web animations or info graphics. Productions must not use any copyrighted materials, such as movie clips and sound bites or music without broadcast rights. Any animation style is allowed, such as 2-D, 2.5-D, 3-D, or stop motion. Products will be judged on the use of cleverness to convey information, entertainment value and evidence of animation skill. Do not submit copyrighted rigs, props or characters. Within the caption, explain why the product was created and how it was used such as a broadcast product, video production, or web element. Animation created and used as a part of another entry, such as a video product or multimedia story, may not be entered. Product may be

submitted as part of a graphic designer's portfolio or the Communicator of the Year category, but no other categories. Upload entry to DVIDS as a high-resolution MP4 or SVG file using the graphics upload portal.

Award Type: Individual.

5. Civilian Graphic Designer of the Year. Candidates must submit an entry consisting of *six products* from the graphic design categories with at least one from each of the following categories: Digital Art, Identity Design, and Layout and Design. Ensure each product was uploaded and published to DVIDS between Jan. 1, 2021 and 11:59 p.m. U.S. Eastern Time Dec. 31, 2021 as a separate file in DVIDS before creating the collection using DVIDS awards contest module. Each product must contain a caption and have its own VIRIN.

Other requirements:

- Follow entry criteria listed in Section V.
- Submit entry as a collection within the DVIDS Awards interface module.
- Do not submit two-dimensional work created by free-hand methods using dry- or wet-based methods, such as line art, sketches, water colors and oil paintings, and work created using pencil, chalk and charcoal: pictures of displays; and fine art pieces.
- 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.
- Do not extract elements from a layout and design product as a separate product. Conversely, do not enter a layout and design product that contains elements submitted into the digital art and identity design categories. Each product must be a separate and distinct from the other.
- Do not submit layouts from interactive publications or interactive PDF documents.

Submit entry as a **collection** in the DVIDS Awards module interface.

Award Type: Individual.

- D. **Photo**. All products will contain embedded captions and other required metadata, including a VIRIN. Refer to the [DoD Visual Information Style Guide](#) for specific details. In addition, all products must support or contribute to organizational communication objectives and be authorized products approved for release. Photo illustrations are ineligible to compete in any of the photo categories. Those that do not follow these requirements will be disqualified.



1. **Photo Series.** A series of at least 7, but no more than 12 uncontrolled action photos that depict a military or military-related storyline or theme, including a military operation or contingency, or participation in a military exercise or training events. Photos may depict one particular aspect of an operation or the entire event. Do not submit a composite layout. One photo from the series or the entire series may be submitted as part of a photographer's portfolio. One photo from the series also may be submitted as part of the Communicator of the Year portfolio, but it must not be the same photo submitted to a photographer of the year portfolio. Entrants electing to enter photos from the series to the portfolio categories may not enter the remaining photos in any other category. Upload each photo separately in DVIDS as a high-resolution file, each with its own VIRIN, and then submit the items as a **collection** within DVIDS.  
Award Type: Individual.
2. **Picture Story.** A series of at least 7, but no more than 12 photos that depict a military or military-related storyline or theme that does not meet the criteria specified in Photo Series category. Controlled and uncontrolled action photos are acceptable. Do not submit a composite layout. One photo from the Picture Story series or the entire series may be submitted as part of a photographer's portfolio. One photo from the series also may be submitted as part of the Communicator of the Year portfolio, but it must not be the same photo submitted to the photographer of the year portfolio. Entrants electing to enter photos from the Picture Story series to the portfolio categories may not enter the remaining photos in any other category. Upload each photo separately in DVIDS as a high-resolution file, each with its own VIRIN, and then submit the items as a **collection** within DVIDS.  
Award Type: Individual.
3. **News Photo.** Scheduled or unscheduled news event featuring a military organization, employees, equipment or family members. Photo may be submitted as part of a photographer's portfolio or to the Communicator of the Year category, but no other categories. Upload entry in DVIDS as a high-resolution file.  
Award Type: Individual.
4. **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. Photo may be submitted as part of a photographer's portfolio or the Defenses Storyteller of the Year category, but no other categories. Upload entry in DVIDS as a high-resolution file.  
Award Type: Individual.
5. **Portrait.** A picture of a person that identifies and captures the essence of that person's character and depicts his or her personality. Only one person may be portrayed in the photo. Official photos are not allowed. Photo may be submitted as part of a photographer's portfolio or the Communicator of the Year category, but no other categories. Upload entry in DVIDS as a high-resolution file.  
Award Type: Individual.

6. Civilian Photographer of the Year. Candidates must submit a portfolio consisting of *seven examples* of their work from the photography categories. The portfolio must contain the following:
  - One news photo
  - One feature photo
  - One portrait
  - Three photos of the candidate's choice
  - One photo series that consists of at least 7, but no more than 12 photos. Series can be a Picture Story. Do not submit a composite layout.

Entry will consist of 13 to 18 images in total.

**Do not submit the same photo more than once in the portfolio.** For example, candidates entering Picture Story as their series entry may not use one of these images as their news or feature photo, portrait or as one of their candidate's choice entries. This does not prohibit photographers from using a different photo from that same operation as their news, feature or photographer's choice photos. Note, however, that the purpose of the portfolio is to demonstrate one's ability to take photos in a variety of settings. Therefore, photos taken from more than one operation or event earn higher scores.

Portfolio may **not** include Photojournalism or Multimedia Story entries, and will include only one photo series.

Do not extract photos from a multimedia product or other video product and enter them as a portrait, news photo, feature photo or candidate's choice photo if the multimedia product or video is submitted in its entirety to another category. Upload each photo separately in DVIDS as a high-resolution file, each with its own VIRIN, and then group the photos for the series entry as a collection prior to creating the portfolio entry.

Submit entry as a **portfolio** in the DVIDS Awards interface module.

Award Type: Individual.

#### E. **Print.**

1. Publication. DoD publications (newspapers, newsletters or magazines) that support the command's information mission. Eligible publications include those that are *printed* by a commercial publisher under an exclusive contract with the command using appropriated funds (which means they do not have advertising) or those printed using the commercial-enterprise concept (which means the publication contains advertisements) as stated in DoDI 5120.04 and those produced using desktop publishing software with a *PDF* as the final product.

For printed publications, organizations must be prepared to provide a copy of the signed contract between the command and the publisher. Printed publication must contain a publication flag (nameplate) and a masthead specifically stating the

publication is an official publication printed under contract with the commercial publisher as required by DoDI 5120.04. Upload entry as a PDF in DVIDS and list all contributors in the credit field of the metadata. If a version may also be found on the command's website, provide the URL on the submission list; both versions must be the same. Publications that use the commercial-enterprise concept may include advertisements, but they are not required to do so. Advertisements are not judged.

PDF publications are page oriented and have static layouts. **Entries may not contain interactive design elements, such as animation, slideshows or embedded video.** Publication must contain a publication flag (nameplate) and a masthead using similar language required of funded publications as specified in DoDI 5120.04. Since the publication is a PDF, simply upload it in DVIDS and list all contributors in the credit field of the metadata.

Additional requirements for printed and PDF publication entries:

- At least four editions of the publication must have been printed in calendar year 2021. For the 2021 competition year, enter only one issue.
- Installation guides, directories, yearbooks, annual reports, and cruise books are not news publications and, therefore, are ineligible.

Award Type: Unit.

2. Online Publication. Entry will be judged as it exists on the day of judging. Entry must be a publication designed exclusively for the web and viewable on mobile devices. Online publications use responsive design and, therefore, are interactive by definition. This entry must display transmedia properties, such as hyperlinks, embedded video, 3-D imagery and/or slideshows. They are created using web or HTML/CSS-based content application software such as HTML 5, iFrames or some other mobile-enabled platform. Publications created using publication software and then posted to an organization's website as a PDF are not eligible nor are electronic versions of printed publications. Also ineligible are command websites. Examples of what constitutes an online publication include "[The Washington Post](#)," "[USA Today](#)" and "[Rolling Stone](#)." Service flagship publications, such as "Airman Magazine" and "All Hands Magazine," are ineligible. Do not upload entry to DVIDS; instead, provide URL information, including all contributors, on submission list.

Award Type: Unit.

3. 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.

Upload entry to DVIDS as a story with or without photos. Photos will not be judged.

Add the page number (if published in a printed or PDF product first), and the date and name of the publication and/or the website in which the article first appeared as the last paragraph of the story. Use the appropriate version of the following examples:

- Story was originally published on Page 12 of the Feb. 12, 2021 issue of “Publication Name.” It may also be found at <URL>.
- Story was originally posted to the Base X website on Feb. 12, 2021 and may be found at <URL>.

DVIDS and published versions must be the same with one exception: to make *minor* corrections to the story. If corrections are made, an explanation must be provided as the last line of the DVIDS version. Here are two examples:

- This story differs from the version published in the Feb. 12, 2021 issue of “Publication Name” in that John Peter’s name has been corrected.
- This story differs from the version posted Feb. 12, 2021 on the Installation X website. It was updated Feb. 15, 2021 to correct the address for the family center.

Story may be submitted as part of a writer’s portfolio or the Communicator of the Year category, but no other categories.

Photos uploaded with the story to DVIDS may be submitted in the News Photo, Feature Photo or Portrait categories as appropriate since they are not being judged, but they may not be used in the Photo Series, Picture Story or Photojournalism categories.

Award Type: Individual.

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

Upload entry to DVIDS as a story with or without photos. Photos will not be judged.

Add the page number (if published in a printed or PDF product first), and the date and name of the publication and/or the website in which the article first appeared as the last paragraph of the story. Use the appropriate version of the following examples:

- Story was originally published on Page 12 of the Feb. 12, 2021 issue of “Publication Name.” It may also be found at <URL>.
- Story was originally posted to the Base X website on Feb. 12, 2021 and may be found at <URL>.

DVIDS and published versions must be the same with one exception: to make *minor* corrections to the story. If corrections are made, an explanation must be provided as the last line of the DVIDS version. Here are two examples:

- This story differs from the version published in the Feb. 12, 2021 issue of “Publication Name” in that John Peter’s name has been corrected.
- This story differs from the version posted Feb. 12, 2021 on the Installation X website. It was updated Feb. 15, 2021 to correct the address for the family center.

Story may be submitted as part of a writer’s portfolio or the Communicator of the Year category, but no other categories.

Photos uploaded with the story to DVIDS may be submitted in the News Photo, Feature Photo or Portrait categories as appropriate since they are not being judged, but they may not be used in the Photo Series, Picture Story or Photojournalism categories.

Award Type: Individual.

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

Upload entry to DVIDS as a story with or without photos. Photos will not be judged.

Add the page number (if published in a printed or PDF product first), and the date and name of the publication and/or the website in which the article first appeared as the last paragraph of the story. Use the appropriate version of the following examples:

- Commentary was originally published on Page 12 of the Feb. 12, 2021 issue of "Publication Name." It may also be found at <URL>.
- Commentary was originally posted to the Base X website on Feb. 12, 2021 and may be found at <URL>.

DVIDS and published versions must be the same with one exception: to make *minor* corrections. If corrections are made, an explanation must be provided as the last line of the DVIDS version. Here are two examples:

- This commentary differs from the version published in the Feb. 12, 2021 issue of "Publication Name" in that John Peter's name has been corrected.
- This commentary differs from the version posted Feb. 12, 2021 on the Installation X website. It was updated Feb. 15, 2021 to correct the address for the family center.

Story may be submitted as part of a writer's portfolio or the Communicator of the Year category, but no other categories.

Photos uploaded with the commentary to DVIDS may be submitted in the News Photo, Feature Photo or Portrait categories as appropriate since they are not being judged. They may not be used in the Photo Series, Picture Story or Photojournalism categories.

Award Type: Individual.

6. Blog Post. A blog post is an article written using an informational or conversational style and conveys the writer's opinion. Ghost-written blogs and those written by commanders or those in a leadership position are ineligible. Blog posts must be from an official military blog that has been registered as such as required in DoDI 8550.01, "DoD Internet Services and Internet-based Capabilities."

Upload entry to DVIDS as a story with the same photos, if any, posted to the blog post. Photos will not be judged. The DVIDS version and the blog post version must be the same.

Add date and URL in which the original blog post was published as the last line of text during the DVIDS upload process. For example: Blog post was originally posted on Feb. 12, 2021, to the <Command Name> official blog site and may be found at <URL>.

Judges will navigate to the original blog post to judge the entry. If the URL is not working, the judges reserve the right to disqualify the entry.

Blog post may be submitted as part of a writer's portfolio or the Communicator of the Year category, but no other categories.

Photos uploaded with blog post to DVIDS may be submitted in the News Photo, Feature Photo or Portrait categories, as appropriate, since they are not being judged as part of this entry. The photos, however, may not be used in the Photo Series, Picture Story or Photojournalism categories.

Award Type: Individual.

7. Photojournalism. Entries must include a story and at least three, but no more than five photographs with embedded captions. All elements will be judged. Photos and story must be on the same topic. Story and photos must be the work of one individual.

Upload entry to DVIDS, adding the page number (if published in a printed product first), and the date and name of the publication and/or the website in which the article first appeared. Use the appropriate version of the following examples:

- Story was originally published on Page 12 of the Feb. 12, 2021, issue of "Publication Name." It may also be found at <URL>.
- Commentary was originally posted to the Base X website on Feb. 12, 2021, and may be found at <URL>.

DVIDS and published versions must be the same with one exception: to make *minor* corrections. If corrections are made, an explanation must be provided as the last line of the DVIDS version. Here are two examples:

- This version differs from the one published in the Feb. 12, 2021, issue of "Publication Name" in that John Peter's name has been corrected.
- This version differs from the one posted Feb. 12, 2021, on the Installation X website. It was updated Feb. 15 to correct the address for the family center.

Story may be submitted in its entirety as part of a writer's portfolio or the Communicator of the Year category, but no other categories.

Award Type: Individual.

8. Civilian Writer of the Year. Candidates must submit *five* writing examples: one information story, one feature story, and three stories of the candidate’s choice.). All entries must be from separate events.

Do not submit a photojournalism product in its entirety as a candidate’s choice; submit only the story. However, do not submit a story from a photojournalism product if the entire photojournalism product is being entered into the Communicator of the Year category.

Upload each article as a separate story in DVIDS.

Add the page number (if published in a printed product first), and the date and name of the publication and/or the website in which the articles first appeared as the last paragraph of the story. Use the appropriate version of the following examples:

- Story was originally published on Page 12 of the Feb. 12, 2021 issue of “Publication Name.” It may also be found at <URL>.
- Story was originally posted to the Base X website on Feb. 12, 2021 and may be found at <URL>.

DVIDS and published versions must be the same with one exception: to make *minor* corrections. If corrections are made, an explanation must be provided as the last line of the DVIDS version. Here are two examples:

- This version differs from the article published in the Feb. 12, 2021 issue of “Publication Name” in that John Peter’s name has been corrected.
- This version differs from the article posted Feb. 12, 2021 on the Installation X website. It was updated Feb. 15, 2021 to correct the address for the family center.

Submit entry as a **collection** within the DVIDS Awards interface module.

Award Type: Individual.

- F. **Video**. All products will contain required metadata, including a VIRIN. They must also support or contribute to organizational communication objectives and be approved for release. Slates are not required and should not be included. However, slate information may be useful when completing the metadata fields, including the caption field, upon file upload to DVIDS. **Those that do not follow these requirements will be disqualified.**

Note the use of the words “caption” and “captioning” is not the same as “closed caption” or “closed captioning.”

A caption is used to describe who is profiled in the product, 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 upon upload to DVIDS. Refer to the [DoD Visual Information Style Guide](#) for specific information.

A closed caption (or closed captioning) is 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.

Video products submitted to the media awards competition may contain closed captions, but they are not required. However, a caption in the metadata field is required.

1. **Short-form Production Video.** A self-contained video production conveying military information using process components such as script, talent, pre-production, production and post-production. Sound, music, narration and interviews with identified participants for voice-over may be used. Appropriate effects, graphics, fades or wipes are allowed. This is a unit award, which means that the product was created by more than one individual. Since it is a team product, the VIRIN must contain a DVIAN in place of the Vision ID. List all contributors in the credit field during metadata review. Production in its entirety must be 5 minutes or less in duration. Product may not be submitted in any other category. Upload entry in DVIDS.

Award Type: Unit.

2. **Long-form Production Video.** A self-contained video production conveying military information using process components such as script, talent, pre-production, production and post-production. Sound, music, narration and interviews with identified participants for voice-over may be used. Appropriate effects, graphics, fades or wipes are allowed. This is a unit award, which means that the product was created by more than one individual. Since it is a team product, the VIRIN must contain a DVIAN in place of the Vision ID.

Entry must be greater than 5 minutes in duration. Enter productions 15 minutes or less in duration in their entirety. Productions greater than 15 minutes must be condensed to 15 minutes or less for judging. Upload original production in DVIDS first and then upload the condensed version. While editing metadata during upload to DVIDS, list all contributors in the credit field and add a link to the original version in the caption. For example:

U.S. Soldiers assigned to the 842nd Signal Company participate in a unit history commemoration at Fort Bragg, N.C., April 21, 2021. (U.S. Army video by Cpl. Jane Smith, Sgt. 1st Class Jack Sparrow and Staff Sgt. Jill Jones.

This is a condensed version of the original production, which may be found at [www.dvidshub.net/video/XXXXXX/title-of-product](http://www.dvidshub.net/video/XXXXXX/title-of-product).

Product may not be submitted in any other category.

Award Type: Unit.

3. **B-roll.** A video on the same or military-related theme. Must be the work of 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 footage may also be used to create an entry for the Multimedia Product, Video Story or Video Series produced by the same individual. The entry may also be submitted as part of a videographer's portfolio, but no other



category. Submit as one file. Total run time must be 5 minutes or less. Ensure video contains the required metadata, including a VIRIN, then upload to DVIDS.  
Award Type: Individual.

4. Multimedia Product. Entry must illustrate 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, design or any other visual tool. Must use a minimum of three elements. May be a feature, personality or news journalism piece. Entry may not include dramatization. An entry is defined as a single story produced and edited by one individual with at least 51 percent of the story's content created by that individual. Total run time must be 5 minutes or less. Entry will be judged by the quality of storytelling and creative use of combined mediums. Product may be submitted as part of a videographer's portfolio or the Communicator of the Year category, but no other categories. Upload entry in DVIDS.  
Award Type: Individual.
5. Video Story. May be a feature, personality or news journalism piece. Story must have a military tie. Entrant must have contributed at least 51 percent of the footage with the remainder coming from any other non-copyrighted source. Footage from the entry submitted for b-roll category may be used. 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. Total run time must be 5 minutes or less. Product may be submitted as part of a videographer's portfolio or the Communicator of the Year category, but no other categories. Upload entry in DVIDS.  
Award Type: Individual.
6. Video Spot. Entries must be one spot 60 seconds or less in length. The target audience must be identified in the caption. Product may be submitted as part of a videographer's portfolio or the Defenses Storyteller of the Year category, but no other categories. Upload entry in DVIDS.  
Award Type: Individual.
7. Video Series. A sequence of videos on a common military-related theme. Entry must include two, but no more than four video stories dealing with a common theme. The series must have been planned in advance as a sequence of videos and each video must be 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. Each video in the series must be 5 minutes or less in duration. Reporter stand-ups are allowed but not required. One video from the series may be submitted as part of the videographer's portfolio. One video from the series also may be submitted as part of the Communicator of the Year portfolio, but it must not be the same video submitted

to the videographer's portfolio. Entrants electing to enter videos from series to the portfolio categories may not enter the remaining videos to any other category. Upload each video as a separate file in DVIDS, ensuring each video contains the required metadata, including a VIRIN. Upload entry in DVIDS as a **collection**.

Award Type: Individual.

8. Civilian Videographer of the Year. Candidates must submit an entry consisting of four examples of their work. It must contain:

- One B-roll video
- One video story
- 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.

Other requirements:

- A B-roll video may not be submitted as a candidate's choice.
- Each video product must be 5 minutes or less in duration.
- Portfolio in its entirety must not exceed 20 minutes.
- Slates are not required and should not be included.
- Videos may contain closed captions, but they are not required.

Submit entry as a **collection** within the DVIDS Awards interface module.

Award Type: Individual.

## 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](http://www.copyright.gov). HIPAA information may be found at [www.hhs.gov](http://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 DoD Media Awards contest must include unlimited distribution. Individually or personally purchased licenses are not authorized. 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 DoD Instruction 5230.29, "Security and Policy Review of Information for Public Release." Any questions regarding public release should be directed to the local public affairs office.
4. Printed, PDF and online publications must conform to 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, 2019 and include metadata in accordance with the [DoD Visual Information Style Guide](#) dated January 28, 2020.