

To: MNA judges
From: Korrie Wenzel
Re: Ingrid Harbo for Dave Pyle Young Reporter
Date: Sept. 28, 2022

Judges of the MNA contest,
Please strongly consider Ingrid Harbo as your choice for Dave Pyle Young Reporter.
For a moment, close your eyes and imagine you are a young reporter at a public meeting on a public college campus. As judges in this contest, I bet you have actually been at countless meetings like this.
But imagine you just started your career a few months before, and now you're sent off to an area community, on your own, to cover this meeting. And then, when you take a moment to snap a photo of the meeting, you are called out by the meeting organizer for "breaking the rules" of this public meeting – that is, no photos, etc. And the room fills with a terrible awkwardness as all eyes gaze upon you for this so-called "infraction."
This actually happened to Ingrid at a meeting on the campus of the University of Minnesota Crookston. And when all eyes turned to her after she was chastised by the meeting's keynote speaker, she held firm, stood her ground and would not back down. She unapologetically had her photo.
When I called the campus the next day to loudly complain (they had, by the way, invited us to be there), they quickly apologized. It turns out, the speaker – who was not a UMC employee – went rogue.
"I'm so sorry for the way Ingrid was treated, and it is not OK," the UMC media relations coordinator wrote to me.
And on the phone, both he and another school official commended Ingrid for her coolness under fire and for standing firm when she knew she was right.
This incident alone is not why Ingrid should be named the Dave Pyle winner for 2022. Instead, her overall portfolio of work should be enough. She has covered difficult meetings. She has ventured into the mud to cover epic floods that plagued our area this spring. She has written about agriculture and she has admirably covered stories within the higher education beat of our Division I university. She is a producer not only of a lot of content, but of interesting and compelling content that is important to the Grand Forks Herald.
Notably, she simply goes out and gets the story. I am certain that each and every one of you would be thrilled to have this young reporter on your staff. She has great focus on her beat and her profession.
Now, add to that the example above, when I told you about her standing firm in a terribly embarrassing and, frankly, a somewhat frightening spot. Considering all of this, I think she is – without a doubt – very worthy of this award.
On a side note, she also is a native of Minnesota, coming to us from St. Peter by way of Concordia University in Moorhead.
I am proud to suggest Ingrid for this award.

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