



January 12, 2017

RE: Ms. Sophie Winnick, SCSPA Journalist of the Year

Dear SCSPA Journalist of the Year Committee Members,

It is my great honor to recommend Ms. Sophie Winnick for the 2017 South Carolina Scholastic Journalist of the Year award.

In an effort to feature local artists and to create more professional looking publications, the Town of Mount Pleasant Planning and Development Department partnered with the Wando High School Yearbook *Legend* staff to produce our 2016 Planning Calendar and 2015 Annual Report. The Planning Calendar features board and commission submittal and meeting dates, Town special event dates, and images of the community. The Annual Report highlights statistics from our department from the previous year such as permit and inspection data, public outreach events, and special projects. Both are available free of charge to citizens, architects, engineers, builders, realtors, and local business owners.

The presentation of government statistics has a reputation of being dry and uninteresting to most people. Upon seeing the high quality and visual interest of the work of Ms. Sophie Winnick and the *Legend* staff, we relinquished all design and artistic control to them. Ms. Winnick's photographs told the story of what made our community special for those growing up in Mount Pleasant. The images captured both the natural beauty of the Lowcountry and the special moments of youth that evoke warm memories shared by all generations. The results were professional-grade publications which had to be reprinted to meet community demand.

The 2015 Annual Report, which featured over 30 photographs by Ms. Winnick, was also nominated for a Hermes Creative Award. Hermes Creative Awards is an international competition for creative professionals involved in the concept, writing and design of traditional materials and programs, and emerging technologies. Entries come from corporate marketing and communications departments, advertising agencies, PR firms, graphic designers, production companies, web and digital creators and freelancers. Ms. Winnick and the *Legend*

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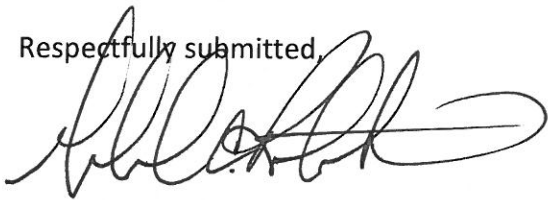
staff, with a budget of zero dollars, competed against marketing giants in Fortune 500 companies and international corporations to win the Platinum Award; the highest level attainable.

The Department of Planning and Development naturally partnered with Ms. Winnick and the *Legend* staff to produce our 2016 Annual Report and 2017 Planning Calendar. Ms. Winnick and the *Legend* staff were given the theme of “water” with less than three months to produce all photographs and designs. The deadline coincided with publication deadline for their principal task to produce the Wando High School Yearbook. Ms. Winnick rose to the challenge creating hundreds of images which she self-curated to more than fifty photographs.

Ms. Winnick’s work and interpersonal skills demonstrate a personal and professional maturity. She is confident, ambitious, and dedicated to exceeding her previous achievements and personal best while encouraging and assisting others on her staff. In our efforts to create more professional level publications, Ms. Winnick and her colleagues on the *Legend* staff exceeded our expectations and set a new standard for our Town by creating an internationally awarded publication. That level of professional and creative work is naturally, and humbly, Ms. Winnick’s standard. We will miss working with Ms. Winnick and the high caliber of her work; however, we look forward to working with those she encouraged and assisted to pursue their creativity in photojournalism to tell their own story.

I hope that you will select this outstanding young woman as the 2017 South Carolina Scholastic Journalist of the Year.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael C. Robertson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Michael C. Robertson
Principal Planner