

Dear Wisconsin News Association,

I am pleased to write this letter recommending Erin Gretzinger for the Collegiate Journalist of the Year. I have known Erin through the entirety of her collegiate career and witnessed every day her commitment to local reporting on Madison and surrounding communities.

Erin's dedication to journalism is shown in her involvement in campus groups like The Badger Herald, CURB Magazine, the UW Center for Journalism Ethics and the Morgridge Center for Public Service. Beyond this, her quality reporting is showcased through freelancing at the Cap Times and Wisconsin State Journal and an internship at Wisconsin Watch.

One of many characteristics that makes Erin a top-tier journalist is her attention to detail. Erin's reporting clearly shows the care she has for her sources. In her most recent investigative reporting for Wisconsin Watch, Erin followed what she thought was a stand-alone tip about contaminants to uncover an issue that affects many Wisconsin homeowners. Erin's reporting also includes a profile for the Cap Times on an athlete who runs marathons in heels, investigative pieces on the quality of school lunch in Wisconsin school districts for Wisconsin Watch and articles about racial equality on the UW campus for The Badger Herald. Erin welcomes the challenge of answering journalism ethics questions and is patient with her reporting, focusing on accuracy rather than speed. As a fellow at the UW Center for Journalism Ethics in the fall, Erin used her platform to explore the ethics of unpublishing stories as a student newspaper and created a guide for student publications. During her time as editor-in-chief for The Badger Herald, Erin ensured that every story was factually accurate and well-written before publishing.

But Erin's commitment to journalism reaches beyond her extensive reporting experience. Erin gives 100% at any task she is assigned, looking out not only for herself but fellow student journalists. Despite her tenure as editor-in-chief ending in May 2022, Erin continues to be a source of information for the current team, helping with web design, networking with alumni and guiding news coverage. In her spare time, she drafted a comprehensive Code of Ethics for The Herald to help strengthen the independent newspaper's reporting and credibility.

I feel honored to know Erin, and I am confident in her future career as a journalist. She serves as a role model for those in the student journalism world and beyond.

Sincerely,

Katie Hardie
Board of Directors Chair
The Badger Herald
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