

New Mexico Press Women Announces its 2020 Communicator of Achievement

April 7, 2020 – Loretta Hall, NMPW Communicator of Achievement Chair
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New Mexico Press Women Communicator of Achievement Chair Loretta Hall is pleased to announce the results of this year's Communicator of Achievement Competition. The winner, journalist Damien Willis, will compete in the 2020 National Federation of Press Women Communicator of Achievement Process, with the winner to be announced at the end of 2020.

Damien Willis

After being obsessed with newspapers from his teen years and studying writing in college, Damien Willis found himself in an unexpected medium: Radio. For 13 years, beginning 2001, he built an audience at Las Cruces' Hot 103 and was named Best DJ Personality by New Mexico Broadcasters Association in 2005.

In 2004, he began writing an entertainment column for the *Las Cruces Sun-News*, a labor of love that's continued through 800 consecutive weeks.

He has served as Public Information Officer for the Third Judicial District Attorney's office and as director of communications for Las Cruces Public Schools.

In 2019, he returned to journalism as lead reporter and coach for the *Sun-News*, editing the paper and developing newsroom talent while covering business.

He has contributed to various community and Press Women activities — including secretary for Las Cruces Press Women, and secretary, vice-president, and newsletter editor for New Mexico Press Women. He's been a member of National Federation of Press Women for the last three years.

Judges' Comments

The three outside judges were uniformly impressed with Damien's record of contributions to the community and our organization as well as his outstanding work in several fields of communication. His average score, on a scale of 100, was 95.8!

One judge commented, "What a delight it was to review this material and to " get to know" Damien through his remarkable achievements."

Another wrote, "As I read the wholehearted and even effusive recommendations made by his colleagues it was impossible suggest he might not be an excellent candidate for the award. The only



reason I did not score the sheet all 10s is that I generally reserve that rating for some perceived perfection that requires personal knowledge, which I do not have. I suspect that if Damien is selected for Communication Achievement award he will represent the NMPW well at the national level.”

NEW MEXICO PRESS WOMEN

New Mexico's largest inclusive media organization is open to both men and women. It is an affiliate of the National Federation of Press Women, providing professional development, networking and First Amendment rights protection to professional journalists and communicators.