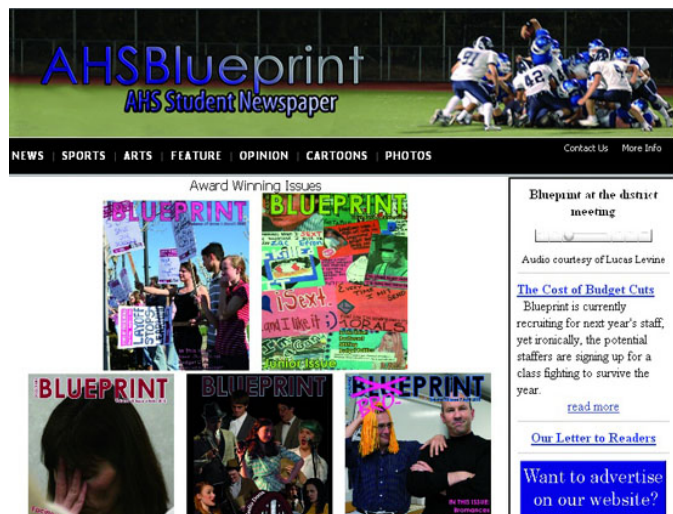


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## Acalanes Blueprint Receives National Distinction and Local Honors

Excerpted from information submitted by Larry Freeman



The American Scholastic Press Association (ASPA) awarded the Acalanes High School newspaper, Blueprint, its "Most Outstanding High School Newspaper for 2009," which Blueprint last received in 1999. Blueprint topped 59 other U.S. high schools with populations of 1001-1700. The Contra Costa Times (CCT) also recently awarded Blueprint its 2010 Dean S. Leshner Award for Overall Excellence. "I am so proud of the grit, the creativity, the dedication, and, not just the pursuit of excellence, but the attainment of it, which these kids have earned," said Blueprint advisor Larry Freeman. Blueprint also earned ASPSA's "First Place with Special Merit" rating, achieving a score of 955 out of 1000.

In granting Blueprint its first place award, Contra Costa Times' judges commended Blueprint for its quality, diversity, and depth, indicating that the stories were "ambitious, well-researched, and engaging."

Editors-in-chief Jessie Welcomer, Helen Wang, and Brianna Tarpey headed the paper during this award-winning year. In addition, Jessie Welcomer won the CCT's Scholastic Journalist Award for her outstanding performance in hard news writing and reporting. "Her passion and pursuit place her among the best of the best of the

Blueprint web site

'aces' - get it done, bird dog news reporters - I have worked with in 20 years of journalism teaching and advising," said Freeman. "It was a really nice honor to be presented with the award. Our staff has worked really hard this year and improved immensely, and all the awards we've won recently are a nice acknowledgement of all our efforts," added Welcomer. These achievements follow Blueprint writer Tara Yarlagadda's win in Quill and Scroll's 2010 contest, which rated her feature story, "Sexting Sensation Sweeps Nation," as the best in the nation compared to 350 other entries in the category.

"These kids ought to be really proud of themselves. It's easy for high school journalists to raise eyebrows; it's much harder to raise awareness. This award says that they do both in the context of responsible journalism that serves the public good," said Freeman

See Blueprint's website <http://www.acalanesblueprint.webs.com> for a list of previous awards and top stories. L. Borrowman

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