

November 14, 2003

Times-Picayune Reporters Named 2003 Excellence in Journalism Winners:
Reporters Honored for Coverage of Engineering Solutions to the Problem of
Louisiana's Eroding Coastline

Washington, D.C. — The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) presented Mark Schleifstein and John McQuaid, reporters for The Times-Picayune, with its 2003 Excellence in Journalism Award for their coverage of the potentially catastrophic effect that hurricane floods could have on Louisiana's eroding coastline and the necessity of engineering solutions in rebuilding and restoration plans. Schleifstein and McQuaid were presented with a \$2,000 award and certificate at a ceremony held during the opening plenary of the 2003 Civil Engineering Conference and Exposition, in Nashville, Tennessee

"Schleifstein, McQuaid and their colleagues at The Times-Picayune produced a series of insightful articles that illustrate the relevance of engineering in protecting the public's safety and America's valuable resources," said ASCE President Thomas Jackson, P.E., F.ASCE. "Their comprehensive reporting and unbiased analysis provided a thorough and accurate picture of the engineering and environmental issues that are a part of our nation's flood-control systems."

"Writing these stories provided us with an opportunity to warn our readers of the inherent dangers involved in living with the risk of hurricanes," Schleifstein remarked. "We could only do that by providing them with explanations of the engineering marvels that make up their protection system, and their shortcomings."

Mark Schleifstein began his career at The Times-Picayune in 1984. In the past 12 years he has been involved with six award-winning series, two of which were Pulitzer Prize finalists. In addition to those nominations, he has been awarded the Associated Press Managing Editors Award for public service journalism, the Selden Ring Award for investigative reporting, the Gerald Loeb Award for distinguished business and financial journalism, and the National Hurricane Conference's Media Award.

John McQuaid is a special projects reporter based in the Washington, D.C. bureau of The Times-Picayune. He has received awards from the Society of Professional Journalists and the American Association for the Advancement of Science, in addition to the John B. Oaks Award for environmental journalism.

Both McQuaid and Schleifstein were part of the Times-Picayune team that was awarded the 1997 Pulitzer Prize for public service for their series on the issues impacting global fisheries.

Schleifstein and McQuaid's entry was selected by the Society's Communications Committee based on the following criteria:

- Offered a practical explanation of how civil engineering influences the region;
- Covered all sides of the issue fairly;
- Incorporated information from knowledgeable civil engineering experts;
- Described the project or issue with accuracy;
- Clearly described the role of engineering in the project including their contributions and influences; and
- Furthered public knowledge and understanding of civil engineering and the issues it impacts.

Past award winners include:

2002

James Glanz, The New York Times, "In Collapsing Towers, a Cascade of Failures," and "Wounded Buildings Offer Survival Lessons," November 11 and December 4, 2001

2001

Nok-Noi Hauger, Williams-Grand Canyon-News, "GCRY & Ashfork Dam Garner State Civil Engineering Awards," May 10-16, 2001

2000

George Hohmann, Charleston Daily Mail, "Infrastructure: A Series," June 12-18, 1999

1999

No award was given

1998

Jerry Needham, The San Antonio News, "San Antonians Won't See Latest River Marvel," Dec. 7, 1997

1997

Mariana Greene, The Dallas Morning News, "If The Hard Hat Fits..." Nov. 27, 1996

1996

Linda J. Johnson, The Vindicator, Youngstown, Ohio, "Bridging the Gap," Jan. 28- 30, 1996 1995

Robert Lee Hotz and Kenneth Reich, Los Angeles Times, "Lessons of Kobe: Hope, Caution," Feb. 12, 1995

1994

Chris Kelly, The Dallas Morning News, "Troubled Waters," Sept. 29, 1993

For more information on the ASCE Excellence in Journalism Award visit http://www.asce.org/pressroom/honors/excel_journalism.cfm, or contact Joan Buhrman at (202) 326-5131, or jbuhrman@asce.org.

Founded in 1852, ASCE represents more than 133,000 civil engineers worldwide and is America's oldest national engineering society. The Society celebrated its 150th Anniversary in 2002.

This weekly report is written by the American Society of Civil Engineers' Government Relations staff. If you have any questions or comments about any items in this report please email govwash@asce.org.