



Contacts:
At USC Annenberg:
Michele Raphael
213-821-1284

At WMUR-TV
Alex Jasiukowicz
603-641-9073
ajasiukowicz@hearst.com

At Hearst-Argyle Television, Inc.:
Thomas W. Campo
212-887-6827
tcampo@hearst.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**WMUR-TV PARENT COMPANY HEARST-ARGYLE TELEVISION
RECEIVES THIRD CONSECUTIVE USC ANNENBERG
WALTER CRONKITE AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TELEVISION
POLITICAL JOURNALISM**

*Television journalists from national, local, public and cable networks honored for
innovative, issue-based coverage of the 2004 campaign*

Manchester, NH, (March 9, 2005) – Proving that good political coverage can make great television, the University of Southern California’s Annenberg School for Communication has once again named Hearst-Argyle Television, Inc., owner of **WMUR-TV**, the winner for the third consecutive time in the “station group” category of the **USC Annenberg Walter Cronkite Award for Excellence in Television Political Journalism**.

Offering praise for the winners, legendary broadcast journalist **Walter Cronkite** underscored the importance of good political journalism to our society.

“At a time when the legitimacy of journalism is under attack, and when economic pressures threaten quality and reward sensationalism, it is heartening to me that there are broadcasters around the country who remain committed to getting it right, making it compelling and serving the public interest,” said Cronkite. “There is no better way to strengthen American democracy than to help citizens understand what is at stake in political campaigns.”

Judges evaluated entries for work covering the 2004 elections. They gave special consideration to innovative, issue-focused reporting that informed viewers about their electoral choices, and that helped them understand ballot issues, the candidates involved, and how electoral choices will affect their lives.

WMUR-TV provided significant political coverage both to local viewers in New Hampshire and other stations in the Hearst-Argyle Television group. Contributions included the following specials, newscast segments, interviews and reports from across the nation and across the state:

SPECIALS

- Two 1-hour political specials
- Seven half-hour town hall style specials with live studio audiences
- Two presidential primary debates, one with ABC and one with Fox News Channel, ABC and the Union Leader
- Four general election debates for Gubernatorial, U.S. Senate and Congressional races produced in conjunction with the Union Leader

NEWSCASTS

- Candidate profile segments
- Exclusive television interviews with both President George Bush and Candidate John Kerry
- WMUR reporters provided live coverage from the Iowa caucus, the Democratic National Convention in Boston, and the Republican National Convention in New York
- WMUR reporters were on the campaign trail with the candidates in all statewide races
- Ad Watch segments to truth check political ads
- Commitment 2004 Question and Answer segments: Candidates (in the same race) were asked the same 10 questions. Their unedited answers were aired back to back during newscasts

PRIMETIME COVERAGE

- Three and a half hours of live coverage on the night of the presidential primary
- Six hours of coverage on election night, including live reports from the Kerry campaign in Boston and the Bush campaign in Washington

The winners of the 2005 USC Annenberg Walter Cronkite Award for Excellence in Television Political Journalism are:

Station Group Category:

• **Hearst-Argyle Television.** Hearst-Argyle Television won its third consecutive Cronkite Award for “its real commitment to political coverage when so many other station groups avoid that coverage altogether,” wrote the judges, who added, “Hearst-Argyle not only gave time to issues but made sure that reporters gave those issues substance and explained them clearly to viewers.” WMUR’s Electoral-news coverage contributed to the Hearst-Argyle trifecta.

Broadcast Network:

- **NBC News' "Meet the Press."** Winning its third consecutive Cronkite Award, "Meet the Press" was honored for Tim Russert's "hard-hitting, well-researched interview with President Bush." Judges described the interview as a strong piece of issue-oriented journalism.

Local Station, Large Market (three winners)

- **WCVB, Boston.** WCVB was honored for its candidate-oriented reporting and its effort to cover issues important to its hometown audience. The coverage was "thoughtful, well-written and issue-based." WCVB was also a 2001 winner.
- **WFAA, Dallas.** WFAA won a second consecutive Cronkite Award for its "continuing commitment to expose political issues and candidates to viewers." WFAA covered both the local and national aspects of the 2004 races, and it created a unique partnership with another station in the market to provide free air time for candidates.
- **WFLA, Tampa, Fla.** WFLA won its second Cronkite Award for "the impressive amount of resources it committed to election coverage," wrote the judges. The station provided "substantial reporting on local issues, most notably the U.S. Senate race in Florida" and "great reporting techniques and enterprise journalism evident in stories on felon voting lists."

Local Station, Medium Market

- **Wisconsin Public Television.** Wisconsin Public Television won its second consecutive Cronkite Award for "demonstrating its thorough knowledge of the candidates, the state and the issues." The station's "Reality Checks" adwatch series, its "Where in Wisconsin" issue series and its debate coverage indicate "the depth of its commitment to political coverage."

Local Station, Small Market

- **KYTV, Springfield, Mo.** KYTV won for the "quality and depth of its reporting, rarely seen in even much larger market stations." The station's "commitment to informing voters is demonstrated in lengthy, carefully balanced pieces that display a willingness to travel and dig to get the story," wrote the judges.

Local Cable News Station

- **6News, Lawrence, Kan.** With the resources of a station that reaches approximately 30,000 homes, 6News produced "compelling, candidate-oriented political coverage that informed its voters about local, hot-button issues," judges wrote. "6News proved that resources do not need to be an obstacle to well produced political coverage."

Individual Achievement (three winners)

- **Robert Mak** (reporter) and **Mike Cate** (producer), **KING-TV, Seattle**. Mak and Cate won their second Cronkite Award for “thorough and balanced coverage, good writing, and excellent reporting and producing.”
- **Katie Moore, KOAA-TV, Colorado Springs, Colo.** Moore was honored for “her wide breadth of reporting, including in-depth candidate profiles, a two-part series on religion and politics, and Truth Checks.”
- **Randy Shandobil, KTVU-TV, Oakland, Calif.** Shandobil won his second Cronkite Award for “solid writing and bold coverage.” Judges were impressed by “his well-researched, issue-based stories and his ability to make complex issues easy to understand.”

The distinguished panel of judges included **Geoffrey Cowan**, dean, USC Annenberg School for Communication; **Patricia Dean**, associate director, USC Annenberg's School of Journalism; **Nancy Platt Jacoby**, veteran television news producer; **Judy Muller**, journalism professor, ABC News correspondent and NPR commentator; **Adam Clayton Powell III**, former radio and television news producer and executive; **Heidi Schulman**, former network news correspondent and producer; and veteran broadcast journalist **Sander Vanocur**.

Cowan underscored the School's commitment to honoring and supporting journalism at all levels.

“The judges were especially impressed by the winners' commitment to covering local campaigns,” said Cowan. “In a year when the Presidential race dominated national and local news, it's great to be able to shine a spotlight on reporters, producers and stations that put a priority on local races and local issues.” In September 2005, USC Annenberg's Western Knight Center for Specialized Journalism will convene a special symposium on political journalism featuring the Cronkite Award winners.

The biennial Awards have been administered since 2000 by USC Annenberg's Norman Lear Center.

About the USC Annenberg School for Communication

The USC Annenberg School for Communication, annenberg.usc.edu, is one of the nation's leading institutions devoted to the study of communication and journalism; their impact on politics, culture and society; and the preparation of students for professional success in these fields.

About Hearst-Argyle

Hearst-Argyle Television, Inc. owns 25 television stations, and manages an additional three television and two radio stations, in geographically diverse U.S. markets. The Company's television stations reach approximately 18% of U.S. TV households, making it one of the largest U.S. television station groups. The Company owns 10 NBC affiliates, and is the second-largest NBC affiliate owner. Hearst-Argyle also owns 12 ABC affiliated stations, and manages an additional ABC station owned by The Hearst Corporation, and is the largest ABC affiliate group. The Company also owns two CBS affiliates and a WB affiliate, and manages a UPN affiliate and an independent station. Hearst-Argyle also is a leader in the convergence of local broadcast television and the Internet through its partnership with Internet Broadcasting Systems. Hearst-Argyle is majority owned by The Hearst Corporation. Hearst-Argyle Series A Common Stock trades on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol "HTV." HTV debt is rated investment grade by Moody's (Baa3), Standard & Poor's (BBB-) and Fitch (BBB-), each with a stable outlook.

###