Hugh S. Sidey Scholarship Award Recipient Announced

Prestigious Award Includes Invitation to the White House Correspondents’ Association Dinner and Mentorship Opportunities

January 17, 2024 (Washington, D.C.) – The White House Historical Association, in partnership with Iowa State University’s Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication, have awarded Cleo Westin with the Hugh S. Sidey Scholarship in Journalism. Westin will receive a $5,000 stipend to visit Washington, D.C., attend the annual White House Correspondents’ Association (WHCA) dinner and be matched with mentors from the White House Press Corps. Westin will also meet with journalists for mentorship opportunities while in Washington, D.C.

The Hugh S. Sidey Scholarship in Journalism at the Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication was established in 2006 at notable journalist Hugh Sidey’s alma mater, Iowa State University. The award supports aspiring journalists at the Greenlee School who exhibit extraordinary understanding of the responsibilities of covering the chief executive and the core principle of social responsibility that resides with journalists. The scholarship was made possible through the generosity of David M. Rubenstein.

"I am incredibly honored to be selected as the recipient of the 2024 Hugh Sidey Scholarship. The opportunity to attend the White House Correspondents’ Dinner in April is an incredible privilege, and I am eager to interact with professionals in political journalism in Washington," Westin said. "I hope this will allow me to continue investigating public records, covering government, writing meaningful stories, and most importantly, continuing to uplift voices on scales I would have never imagined a few years ago."

“It is with great excitement that we announce Cleo Westin as the 2024 Sidey Scholar,” said Stewart McLaurin, president of the White House Historical Association. “It is a privilege to honor the late Hugh Sidey with this collaboration between the Association, the Greenlee School of Journalism and Communication and the White House Correspondents’ Association to bring another budding journalism student to Washington, D.C. in the spring.”
Westin is a third-year student from Des Moines, Iowa, double majoring in journalism and mass communication and political science. She is working toward a minor in meteorology and a certificate in science communication. She has written for the Iowa State Daily since November 2022 in various roles, including senior reporter and summer news editor, but stepped into her current role of politics editor in December 2023.

Westin’s work spans coverage of the Ames City Council to interviewing Iowans at presidential campaign stops. Besides journalism, she plays sousaphone in the Iowa State Cyclone Football 'Varsity' Marching Band and is parliamentarian of the Theta Xi Chapter of Tau Beta Sigma, a service-based honorary band sorority. She is also involved with the Iowa State Winter Guard Club, Political Science Club and Cardinal & Gold.

Previous recipients of the High Sidey Scholarship have attended White House press briefings and visited media outlets including POLITICO, The Washington Post, and McClatchy News Service.

Learn more about the Hugh S. Sidey scholarship.

Read this year’s winning essay.

About The White House Historical Association

First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy envisioned a restored White House that conveyed a sense of history through its decorative and fine arts. In 1961, the White House Historical Association was established to support her vision to preserve and share the Executive Mansion’s legacy for generations to come. Supported entirely by private resources, the Association’s mission is to assist in the preservation of the state and public rooms, fund acquisitions for the White House permanent collection, and educate the public on the history of the White House. Since its founding, the White House Historical Association has contributed more than $115 million in fulfillment of its mission. To learn more about the White House Historical Association, please visit www.whitehousehistory.org.

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