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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE October 3, 2012, Seattle WA CONTACT Kathy Schrier, WJEA executive director, executivedirector@wjea.org

Washington Journalism Educators honor Mike Hiestand for 'Exemplary Contributions'

The Washington Journalism Education Association (WJEA) applauded Mike Hiestand for his years of legal assistance to students and teachers involved with the scholastic press in Washington and across the U.S, at its annual Journalism Day on the University of Washington campus, Sept. 20.

As staff attorney for 12 years at the Student Press Law Center near Washington D.C., Hiestand provided legal assistance to nearly 15,000 high school and college student journalists. After moving to Washington state in 2003, he continued to consult for the SPLC while keeping an active public speaking schedule across the country on issues relating to the scholastic press.

Despite his busy schedule, Hiestand has directed his attention to student press matters in Washington state. When a bill promoting student press rights came before the legislature I 2006, Hiestand testified in Olympia in favor of the bill.

"Having Mike available has been extremely helpful to advisers and students with legal questions," said WJEA Scholastic Press Rights Chair Fern Valentine. "He has been an invaluable resource."

"Mike is considered a foremost authority on student press law, and co-authored 'Law of the Student Press' now in its fourth edition. This is a must-have for anyone teaching student media in the U.S. today," said WJEA executive director Kathy Schrier.

"Whenever my journalism students or I needed legal or ethical advice, Mike was there. His passion and dedication to student journalists' rights and responsibilities have inspired thousands of students and advisers and, frankly, protected and preserved a free and open press for generations to come," said WJEA Past President Vince DeMiero.

In presenting the award, Schrier said that besides being an incredible resource to students and their advisers in student media across the U.S., here in Washington Hiestand has gone far beyond the call of duty, driving many miles to present sessions, speak on panels, and to address school boards in furthering the cause of student press freedom.

Hiestand resides with his family in Ferndale, Wash.