

ISABELLA TOMASINI

# EDITORIAL



# LEADERSHIP

NSPA Individual Best of Show  
Spring 2025 ■ NHSJC Seattle

## EDITOR-IN-CHIEF — 2024-25, 2023-24

### General roles and responsibilities:

- Oversee production of Whitney High Student Media (all publications), lead 39-person staff, produce content for all platforms, edit stories, pages, spreads and posts
- Run editorial board meetings
- Lead class, conduct mini-lessons and coach staffers
- Coordinate deadline calendars
- Manage equipment checkout and maintenance
- Develop and execute onboarding system and checkoffs for new and returning staff
- Plan and execute First Amendment awareness activities
- Serve as liaison between stakeholders, vendors, administrators, industry professionals and staff/adviser
- Select and submit contest entries

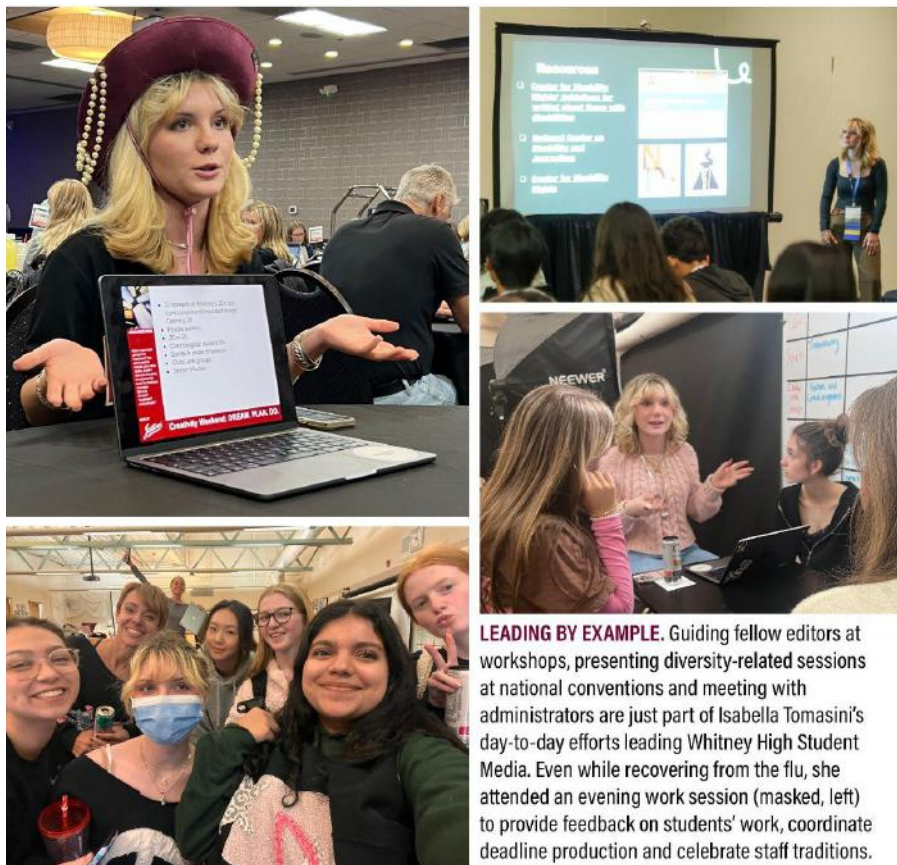
*For more information, see complete job description at the end of this document*

### Specifically this year, additional leadership contributions:

- Research AI in journalism, lead editorial board discussion and write official AI policy for Whitney High Student Media
- Handle takedown requests (conduct review based on staff policy, lead editorial board discussion/voting, communicate with requester)
- Present DEI session at JEA/NSPA National High School Journalism Convention

- Report breaking news stories, including ongoing reporting of teacher union contract negotiations, serving as the primary student journalist interviewing RTPA president and teacher union leaders, including controversial “sickout” event
- Continue coverage of legal disputes surrounding transphobic school board policy
- Co-produce specialty photo shoot, interview and design project featuring 100 students for 20th anniversary edition
- Coordinate Scholastic Journalism Week activities
- Serve as lead editor and spokesperson for Creativity Weekend presentation, critique sessions, professional development activities and convention delegate roles
- Lead diversity audits and DEI programming

Photo collections created by adviser Sarah Nichols, MJE



**LEADING BY EXAMPLE.** Guiding fellow editors at workshops, presenting diversity-related sessions at national conventions and meeting with administrators are just part of Isabella Tomasini's day-to-day efforts leading Whitney High Student Media. Even while recovering from the flu, she attended an evening work session (masked, left) to provide feedback on students' work, coordinate deadline production and celebrate staff traditions.

## PREVIOUS LEADERSHIP ROLES

Photo editor, specialty section editor — 2022-23

Staff member — 2021-22

## SCHOLASTIC JOURNALISM AWARDS/HONORS

- NSPA Leadership in Student Journalism Award (2023, 2024, 2025)
- Quill & Scroll member (inducted 2023)
- Quill & Scroll Yearbook Excellence Contest - individual awards (2024)
- NSPA Individual Awards (Finalist: Design of the Year, Fifth Place: Feature Photo)
- JEA National Student Media Contests (Excellent: Photo Story, Sports Action Photography)
- JEANC Annual Contests - six individual awards (2023, 2024)
- JEANC Best of the West
- First Amendment Press Freedom Award
- CTE Pathway Completer, Publication Design & Multimedia

## CONVENTIONS & WORKSHOPS

- JEA/NSPA National High School Journalism Convention, 2022-25
  - Los Angeles, St. Louis, San Francisco, Boston, Kansas City, Philadelphia (+ Seattle!)
- Columbia Scholastic Press Association Spring Convention, 2023
- Jostens Creativity Workshop (Denver), 2023-24
- NorCal Media Day, 2022

## A FEW RECENT WORK SAMPLES







**MASTER TEACHER.** From helping staff members with camera settings at photo shoots to leading critique sessions, offering feedback and conducting class activities, Isabella Tomasini spends hours each day as a teacher, leading with patience and coaching her peers to produce excellent work in Whitney High Student Media.

## LEADERSHIP PHILOSOPHY (200 words or fewer)

I don't see myself as a leader — I'm a teacher. Over the course of my time serving as an editor and then editor-in-chief, I've valued not the end result, but the process by which I get there. In the short term, I devise solutions for our production or staff challenges, but in the long term I see every obstacle as an opportunity to learn from, to be creative about and to incorporate into systems holistically. Oftentimes, my role isn't actively doing work, but instead helping my staff arrive at an endpoint in an instructive manner, and that method of "leadership" is heavily influenced by Sofia McMaster, who was EIC my freshman year. On my own, I've tweaked this practice to be heavily empirical. Approaching an issue with a solution in mind can cause "miscalculations," both figurative and literal. I've learned I have to let the "problems" I observe teach me a solution, instead of trying to apply a formulaic resolution. I'm constantly utilizing a scientific sense of curiosity and a love for trial-and-error to not just instruct my staff, but to develop an informed theory on how to support them through any obstacle and benefit them personally.

## DESCRIBE YOUR MOST PROUD LEADERSHIP MOMENT (100 words or fewer)

A moment that made me the most proud was presenting as a student speaker at both the Kansas City and Philly NHSJCs. Developing a session on how to cover and represent students with disabilities, the opportunity acted as a way to reflect on something we improved in our own program while educating others on a pivotal part of DEI efforts, especially as I am a student with a disability. As our world continues to change under a new administration, it's important for us to continue prioritizing all types of DEI to reflect the people we cover every single day.



**PLAN, PREP, PRAISE.** In an entirely student-led newsroom, Isabella Tomasini did more than report breaking news for Whitney Update and post award-winning photojournalism on Instagram. She also oversaw production of the 288-page Details, the largest volume in school history. Tomasini managed production, oversaw section editors, provided feedback, asked staffers for input, showcased excellent work from her peers, coordinated page submission and proofs — while designing the yearbook cover, specialty elements and divider spreads.

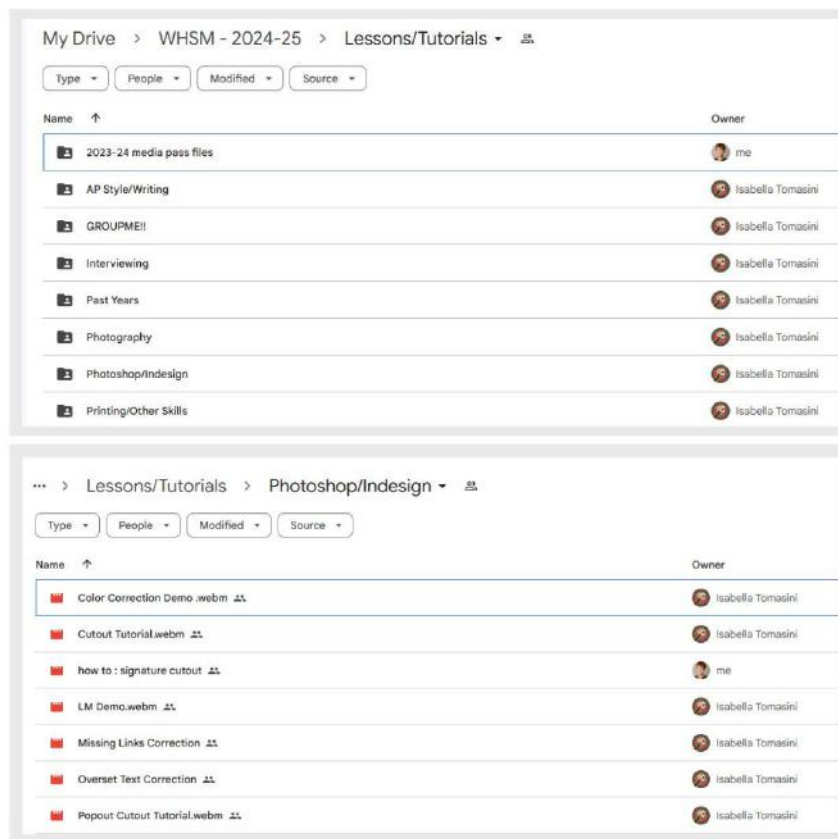


## A STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FROM THE ADVISER (100 words)

At this point, it doesn't matter whether I'm present in C-2. Isabella is in charge, and everyone knows it. She has earned our staff's trust and respect as a skilled visual communicator, tenacious reporter and nurturing mentor. Her editorial leadership overlaps with a demanding AP course load while navigating a disability and debilitating migraines. Isabella's drive to tackle important stories while coaching the staff, solving problems and communicating with

others is unparalleled. Meanwhile she consistently seeks my feedback and applies it. Leading by example as a journalist, editor and agent of change, Isabella makes us all better.





**PAYING IT FORWARD.** One of the biggest long-term effects of Isabella Tomasini's editorial leadership is the repository of tutorials and how-to videos she created to help other staff members. She knows most students need to review the steps more than once, and these resources help staff members find answers to their own questions or get help any time of day. Not only does this empower more students to play a role in our publications, but it also helps protect Tomasini's time for more important responsibilities. Each of the resources shown here is part of Whitney High Student Media's digital staff manual. Tomasini took the initiative to identify needs and develop the materials on her own time.

## Supporting evidence of leadership and impact



	A	B	C	D	E
1	Timestamp	Last name	First name	What class period do you	What camera/kit
390	2/25/2025 13:29:17	Combs	Liba	Period 4 - WHSM	No name
399	2/26/2025 11:44:00	Kim	Timothy	Period 4 - WHSM	Blaze
400	2/26/2025 11:45:43	Alexander	Leila	Period 4 - WHSM	No name
401	2/26/2025 13:26:50	robinson	gabby	Period 4 - WHSM	Kristen
402	2/27/2025 8:31:53	de Valk	Lara	Period 4 - WHSM	Aaryan T5
403	2/27/2025 13:26:24	Gregory	Klara	Period 4 - WHSM	Pineosa (SL2)
404	2/28/2025 11:39:02	Huotari	Luminia	Period 4 - WHSM	Peach
405	2/28/2025 13:19:53	Choi	Sarah	Period 4 - WHSM	Aaryan T5
406	2/28/2025 13:26:39	Janssen	Hannah	Period 4 - WHSM	Sofia ED
407	2/28/2025 13:21:04	Combs	Liba	Period 4 - WHSM	Dalra
408	2/28/2025 13:24:53	phommaraeth	anna	Period 4 - WHSM	Gambino
409	2/28/2025 13:25:40	smith	jasika	Period 4 - WHSM	Kristen
410	2/28/2025 13:45:04	Kim	Timothy	Period 4 - WHSM	Aaryan T5
411	3/4/2025 13:32:19	Curtis	Claira	Period 4 - WHSM	Kristen
412	3/5/2025 10:28:40	de Valk	Lara and Olivia	Period 4 - WHSM	Dalra
413	3/6/2025 11:40:55	smith	jasika	Period 4 - WHSM	Dalra

**BEYOND THE BELL.** Making herself available to staff members several times each day, Isabella Tomasini issued equipment and managed the cameras and lenses for Whitney High Student Media, offering checkouts before school, at break and before lunch using a QR code system and Google Sheet she updated daily.

## Complete job description (Whitney High Student Media)

Editor-in-chief(s), also referred to as EIC(s)

- Serve as top leadership in Whitney High Student Media
- Plan, guide, coordinate all aspects of the program/publication
- Coordinate frequently with Nicks, communicate plans for class/activities
- Post messages to communicate with staff
- Oversee and/or guide other editors

- Begin class with warm-up activity and announcements
- Set and track goals for the program, staff, publications, self
- Plan and announce monthly work nights, bondings, etc
- Plan, announce and oversee publication deadlines
- Make staff bonding a priority by planning and attending activities
- Suggest ideas for trainings, lessons or areas in which the staff needs help
- Teach occasional mini-lessons to serve as a role model and expert
- Motivate and reward staff with special activities and/or celebrations or goodies
- Earn privileges and special access/opportunities based on performance

#### Details (yearbook-related) roles of the EIC

- Responsible for production, quality and submission of all yearbook pages
- Coordinate ladder spreadsheet
- Oversee section editors, specialty editors, staff members
- Select official color palette, typography, other elements (with input from editors, staff)
- Design and submit yearbook cover
- Design and submit endsheets, title page, opening, closing and dividers
- Write/produce colophon
- Maintain consistent verbal and visual elements for a unified book
- Communicate with Jostens rep and plant liaison
- Edit all pages/spreads in a timely manner
- Encourage and motivate staffers related to yearbook production
- Make page corrections and gets frequent feedback from Nicks
- Finish any incomplete work in order to meet deadlines
- Maintain a gallery or file of examples, professional inspiration, ideas
- Create Monarch login accounts on Yearbook Avenue
- Work to maintain a consistent standard of excellence for each section of the book
- Name-check all spreads multiple times for 100 percent accuracy of name spelling
- Measure progress/accomplishments for page deadlines to reward staff

#### Whitney Update (website-related) roles for the EIC

- Responsible for production, quality and posting of all website content
- Maintain site design and updates/functionality
- Coordinate with SNO representatives or support services
- Check analytics to inform and encourage staff
- Plan regular schedule for generating content on the site
- Edit all stories in a timely manner
- Guide and train assistant editor(s)
- Provide feedback to staff members
- Study award-winning sites to get ideas for improvement
- Shoot and post staff photos for bylines/directory
- Help staffers promote story links and promote on other social platforms
- Coordinate breaking news stories and any sensitive coverage as it arises

#### The Roar (magazine-related) roles for the EIC

- Responsible for production, quality and distribution of all magazine content

- Design nameplate and other essential magazine elements (folio, byline, etc)
- Coordinate with printing company for submission
- Coordinate distribution events
- Maintain documents and visuals pertaining to each issue's production
- Provide feedback on story development and page design ideas
- Coordinate advertisements to make sure ads run in issues according to sold contracts
- Check all prepress elements (CMYK, bleeds, trims) and template specifications
- Manage Issuu account and add each new issue to the gallery
- Promote magazine content on social media
- Guide and train assistant editor
- Edit all pages in a timely manner
- Encourage and motivate staffers related to magazine production
- Make page corrections and gets frequent feedback from Nicks
- Finish any incomplete work in order to meet deadlines
- Coordinate paper plate awards following each issue