There were some big payoffs for the nine West High journalism students who attended the Iowa High School Press Association state conference on Oct. 17 in Iowa City.

Laren Schulte, 11, won first place in the on-the-spot yearbook design contest. She competed against 20 students from across the state.

The Beak ‘n’ Eye newspaper won two awards in the state newspaper contest –an honorable mention for overall writing and an honorable mention for overall design.

The students attended five sessions on writing, multimedia and design led by professional journalists and teachers. The keynote speaker, Journalism Teacher of the Year Aaron Manfull from St. Louis, told the approximately 400 students in the audience to be a “game changer” by starting new digital publications on the web. He told advisers to not be afraid to allow students to develop new ways of communicating, such as through Twitter and Wordpress.

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