MINNEAPOLIS (NNPA) - The *Chicago Defender Newspaper*, which at 104, one of the nation's oldest and most influential Black-owned newspapers, was awarded the prestigious Russwurm Award during this year's NNPA Merit Awards Gala.

With two first place and two third place awards, including the John H. Sengstacke General Excellence Award,
Defender
Publisher Michael House took the organization's most coveted award this year, which is based on the paper that wins the most points in categories, including General Excellence.

The Merit Awards Gala, among a staple event during the organization's annual summer convention, is sponsored by the NNPA Foundation. It included a new award this year – the Thomas Morgan III Award for HIV/AIDS Education, named for a *New York Times* editor and president of the National Associate of Black Journalists, who died of AIDS in December of 2007. The winner of that award, sponsored by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's ACT Against AIDS Outreach Initiative, was the
Dallas Examiner
, for its original and consistent reporting on HIV/AIDS last year.

Among other top awards, the *Washington Afro-American* was first place winner of the Sengstacke Award for General Excellence; with the
New Pittsburgh Courier
in second place and
Defender
in third.

Another new addition to the Merit Awards this year was the official naming of the sports award for Don King, the famous boxing promoter who is publisher of the Cleveland Call & Post.
The following is a full list of Merit Award winners:

Thomas Morgan III Award HIV/AIDS Education
1st: The Dallas Examiner
2nd: The Houston Defender
3rd: NY Amsterdam News

John H. Sengstacke General Excellence
1st: Washington Afro-American
2nd: New Pittsburgh Courier
3rd: The Chicago Defender

Robert S. Abbott Best Editorial
1st: The St. Louis American
2nd: The Richmond Free Press
3rd: The New County News

Emory O. Jackson Best Column Writing
1st: Los Angeles Wave
2nd: New County News
3rd: Call and Post

Carl Murphy Best Community Service
1st: The Houston Defender
2nd: The Los Angeles Sentinel
3rd: The Philadelphia Tribune

Ida B. Wells Best News Story
1st: Los Angeles Sentinel
2nd: New County News
3rd: The Dallas Weekly

Frank L. Stanley Sr. Best Feature Story
1st: The Winston-Salem Chronicle
2nd: New County News
3rd: The Portland Skanner

Best News Picture
1st: St. Louis American
2nd: The Charlotte Post
3rd: The Richmond Free Press

Wilbert L. Holloway Best Editorial Cartoon
1st: The Chicago Defender
2nd: The Los Angeles Sentinel
3rd: The Philadelphia Tribune

Robert L. Vann Best Layout and Design
Tabloid
1st: The Portland Skanner
2nd: The Atlanta Voice
3rd: The Chicago Defender

Best Layout and Design
Broadsheet
1st: The Los Angeles Sentinel
2nd: The Philadelphia Tribune
3rd: The St. Louis American

Leon H. Washington Best Special Edition
1st: The Winston-Salem Chronicle
2nd: The Richmond Free Press
3rd: The Michigan Chronicle

W. A. Scott Best Circulation Promotion
1st: Philadelphia Tribune
2nd: St. Louis American
3rd: The Portland Skanner

Ada S. Franklin Best Lifestyles Section
1st: The Charlotte Post
2nd: The New Pittsburgh Courier
3rd: The Los Angeles Sentinel

Best Youth Section
1st: The Philadelphia Tribune
2nd: The New Pittsburgh Courier
3rd: The Los Angeles Sentinel

E. Washington Rhodes Best Original Advertising
1st: The Philadelphia Tribune
2nd: Call and Post
3rd: The Houston Defender

Best Use of Photographs
Tabloid Division
1st: The Chicago Defender
2nd: The Michigan Front Page
3rd: The Portland Skanner

Best Use of Photographs
Broadsheet Division
1st: The Winston-Salem Chronicle
2nd: Insight News
3rd: The St. Louis American

Best Church Page
1st: The Indianapolis Recorder
2nd: The Philadelphia Tribune
3rd: The Los Angeles Sentinel

Don King Best Sports Page
1st: The Los Angeles Sentinel
2nd: The Winston-Salem Chronicle
3rd: The St. Louis American

Best Business Section
1st: The New Pittsburgh Courier
2nd: The Philadelphia Tribune
3rd: The Winston-Salem Chronicle

Best Entertainment Section
1st: The Portland Skanner
2nd: The Philadelphia Tribune
3rd: The St. Louis American