



For Immediate Release

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Nine Oregon high school students advance to March 10 state Poetry Out Loud competition

Salem, Oregon – Regional Poetry Out Loud competitions held in Portland, Salem and Medford Saturday identified the nine Oregon high school students who are invited to compete for the 2018 state title on Saturday, March 10. Three finalists were selected from each regional competition.

Poetry Out Loud is a national contest for high school students, organized in Oregon by the Oregon Arts Commission in collaboration with the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation. Participants memorize and present poems, practicing public presentation skills while exploring the complexity of poetry.

The three top finishers from the Portland Regional Contest, held at Lewis and Clark College, are: Katarina Pejcinovic, West Linn High School; Sarah Calvin-Stupfel, West Salem High School; and Luke Williams, St. Stephen's Academy, Beaverton.

Finalists selected at the Central Regional Contest at Salem's Willamette University are: Jessica Harris, Veritas High School, Newberg; Amy Jarvie, Oregon School for the Deaf, Salem; and Molly Izer, Sandy High School.

The winners of the Southern Regional Contest, hosted at the Medford Public Library, are: Bonnie Drennen, South Umpqua High School, Myrtle Creek; Hannah VonHolle, Logos Public Charter School, Medford; and Landon Moir, Cascade Christian High School, Medford.

"Once again the caliber of performances was impressive and made selecting only three finalists from each competition a challenge," said Deb Vaughn, the Arts Commission's arts education/Poetry Out Loud coordinator.

The State Contest is scheduled from 1 to 4 p.m. in Loucks Auditorium at Salem Public Library (585 Liberty Street SE). The winner will advance to the national Poetry Out Loud competition, scheduled for April 23-25 in Washington, D.C.

Editor's note: Photos and bio information are available upon request.

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The Oregon Arts Commission provides leadership, funding and arts programs through its grants, special initiatives and services. Nine commissioners, appointed by the Governor, determine arts needs and establish policies for public support of the arts. The Arts Commission became part of Business Oregon (formerly Oregon Economic and Community Development Department) in 1993, in recognition of the expanding role the arts play in the broader social, economic and educational arenas of Oregon communities. In 2003, the Oregon legislature moved the operations of the Oregon Cultural Trust to the Arts Commission, streamlining operations and making use of the Commission's expertise in grantmaking, arts and cultural information and community cultural development.

The Arts Commission is supported with general funds appropriated by the Oregon legislature and with federal funds from the National Endowment for the Arts as well as funds from the Oregon Cultural Trust. More information about the Oregon Arts Commission is available online at: www.oregonartscommission.org.