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24th Letters About Literature Writing Contest Announces Winners

Read. Be Inspired. Write Back



Charleston, W. VA. – The West Virginia Center for the Book at the WV Library Commission held the 2017 *Letters About Literature* awards ceremony at the state Culture Center on Thursday, May 18, 2017. Local author Belinda Anderson spoke and Gayle Manchin, Cabinet Secretary of Education and the Arts, provided a video greeting at the event, where 117 West Virginia students were honored with Top Honors, Honors, Honorable Mention, and Notable Mention recognition.

Letters About Literature is a national reading and writing program, supported locally by the WV Center for the Book, an affiliate of the National Center for the Book in the Library of Congress. The theme for this year's writing competition was *How Did an Author's Work Change Your View of the World or Yourself?* Students in grades 4-12 (divided by Levels 1-3) wrote letters to authors (living or dead) telling them how a book, poem, or play by that author affected them personally. Secretary Manchin noted, "These winners exemplify the best of the best of our young writers, who could one day be our new authors, poet laureates, playwrights, journalists... this is their beginning!"

This year 723 students from West Virginia were among the nearly 40,000 students nationwide who wrote *Letters About Literature*. National screeners selected 117 of the West Virginia entries for state level judging, where judges, chosen by the West Virginia Center for the Book, determined the top letters in each competition level for the state. Entries for state level judging were selected on how well they met the required criteria of: audience, purpose, grammatical conventions, and originality.

Those receiving Top Honors advance to national level judging. The Center for the Book in the Library of Congress then selects a panel of judges to award national winners and national honor winners. Karen Goff, WVLC Executive Secretary, said, "It is exciting to see these gifted young students display their talents for writing and their enthusiasm for books. WVLC is proud to support the *Letters About Literature* program."

The West Virginia Library Commission is pleased to announce the following state level recipients:

Level 1: Grades 4-6

TOP HONORS: Kierston Lauerman (Hurricane MS)

HONORS: Elijah Campbell (Melrose Elementary), Brenden Moore (The Linsly School)

HONORABLE MENTION: Dalton DeJarnette (Leading Creek Elementary), Natalie Elgin (Hurricane MS), Olivia Haught (Hurricane MS), Jay Huff (Hurricane MS), Olivia Kiger-Camilo (The Linsly School), Summer Lively (Hurricane MS), Samvat jai Yadav (Princeton MS)

Level 2: Grades 7-8

TOP HONORS: Annabelle Blosser (The Linsly School)

HONORS: Ana Gayton (John Adams MS), Isabell Roop (Beckley, WV)

HONORABLE MENTION: Lily Banford (St. Joseph Catholic MS), Kiran Boggs (Huntington, WV), Julia Conner (Princeton MS), Sydney Glessner (The Linsly School), Emma Green (John Adams MS), Ava Reed (John Adams MS), Adesh Urval (The Linsly School)

Level 3: Grades 9-12

TOP HONORS: Sydnie Knafla (Washington HS)

HONORS: Jakob Henderson (Wirt County HS), Mary Laswell (East Fairmont HS)

HONORABLE MENTION: Cassie Adkins (Ravenswood HS), Alison Graley (South Charleston HS), Haley McKown (Wirt County HS), Sara Nelson (South Charleston HS), Adithi Ramakrishnan (Ashburn, VA), Corey Shorte (South Charleston HS), Haley Stephenson (South Charleston HS)

Notable Mention:

Level 1

Kaidin Lambert (Melrose Elementary School), Justin Lester (Pikeview MS), Nicolas Frazier (St. Joseph Catholic MS), Emilea Stephens (Crum MS), Elexis Spurlock (St. Joseph Catholic MS), Isabella Meade (St. Joseph Catholic MS), Haleigh Sammons (Crum MS), Zander Pinson (St. Joseph Catholic MS), Marshall Reynolds (St. Joseph Catholic MS), Frank Day (St. Joseph Catholic MS), Ashtyn Krueger (Hurricane MS), Caroline Damron (Hurricane MS), Adrianna McNeely (Hurricane MS), Allison Perry (Hurricane MS), Hadlee Berkley (Crum MS)

Level 2

Bella Giovengo (The Linsly School), Kiley Harmon (Fairmont Catholic School), Nora Augenstein (Parkersburg Catholic HS), Denisha Ratcliff (Crum MS), Haylee Porter (Crum MS), Cadie Miller (Crum MS), Emily Justice (Crum MS), Tyler Johnson (Crum MS), Katie Copley (Crum MS), Devesh Shah (The Linsly School), Kobe Hill (The Linsly School), Steven Felton (The Linsly School), Taylor Ewart (The Linsly School), Anthony Defazio (The Linsly School), Charlie Allison (The Linsly School), Cecilia Fatta (Parkersburg, WV), Carmela Lilly (Fairmont Catholic School), Madison Meade (The Linsly School), Edyn Parsons (Geary Elementary/MS), Suraya Boggs (Spencer, WV), Ian Sears (John Adams MS), Abigail Fizer (John Adams MS), Hannah Driggs (John Adams MS), Tristan Walker (John Adams MS), Julie Olsson (Gilmer County HS), Ean Hamric (Gilbert County HS), Kaitlyn

Anderson (Gilmer County HS), Sophie Lipscomb (Princeton MS), Emily Young (John Adams MS), Nicholas Payne (John Adams MS), Aidan Smith (Fairmont Catholic School), Lucy Skaff (St. Joseph Catholic MS), Avery Johnson (St. Joseph Catholic MS), Gunnell Hickman III (St. Joseph Catholic MS), Imani Hickman (St. Joseph Catholic MS), Margaret Ann Gibbs (St. Joseph Catholic MS), Rachel Bare (St. Joseph Catholic MS), Doria Aractingi (St. Joseph Catholic MS), Olivia Allen (St. Joseph Catholic MS), Abby Stovall (Pikeview MS), Hannah Jones (Pikeview MS), Sophia Tomana (Fairmont Catholic School), Dylan Cline (Princeton MS)

Level 3

Kayden Upton (South Charleston HS), Zachary Hall (South Charleston HS), Alaina Allen (South Charleston), Jared Sykes (Greenbrier West HS), Jacob Elliott (Roane County HS), BreeAnna Rucker (Roane County HS), Alex Holliday (Roane County HS), Caitlyn Jarvis (Roane County HS), Justin West (Roane County HS), Lauren Alderson (Greenbrier West HS), Madison Sites (Petersburg HS), Adrianna Waldron (Petersburg HS), David Bishop (Greenbrier West HS), Kayli Hughes (Wirt County HS), Nia Fernandes (Vienna, WV), Larissa Tyree (Woodrow Wilson HS), Julia Henry (Woodrow Wilson HS), Kasey Bowyer (Woodrow Wilson HS), Katie Frazier (Wirt County HS), Addie Bailey (Wirt County HS), Ally Jones (Wirt County HS), Lynsey Munday (Wirt County HS), Carleigh Abbott (South Charleston HS), Alexis Woodard (Washington High School), Alyssa Lively (Ravenswood High School), Walker O'Neill (South Charleston HS), Sydney Holstein (South Charleston HS), Joshua Maddy (South Charleston HS), Morgan Sites (Petersburg HS)

The Library of Congress will announce all National and National Honor Winners and awards and will list all state-level winners on its website: www.read.gov/letters/. The annual *Letters About Literature* writing contest for young readers is made possible by a generous grant from the Dollar General Literacy Foundation, with additional support from gifts to the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress.

West Virginia Library Commission encourages lifelong learning, individual empowerment, civic engagement and an enriched quality of life by enhancing library and information services for all West Virginians. WVLC is an independent agency of the Office of the Secretary of Education and the Arts.

To learn more about WVLC, please visit www.librarycommission.wv.gov or call us at 304-558-2041.

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